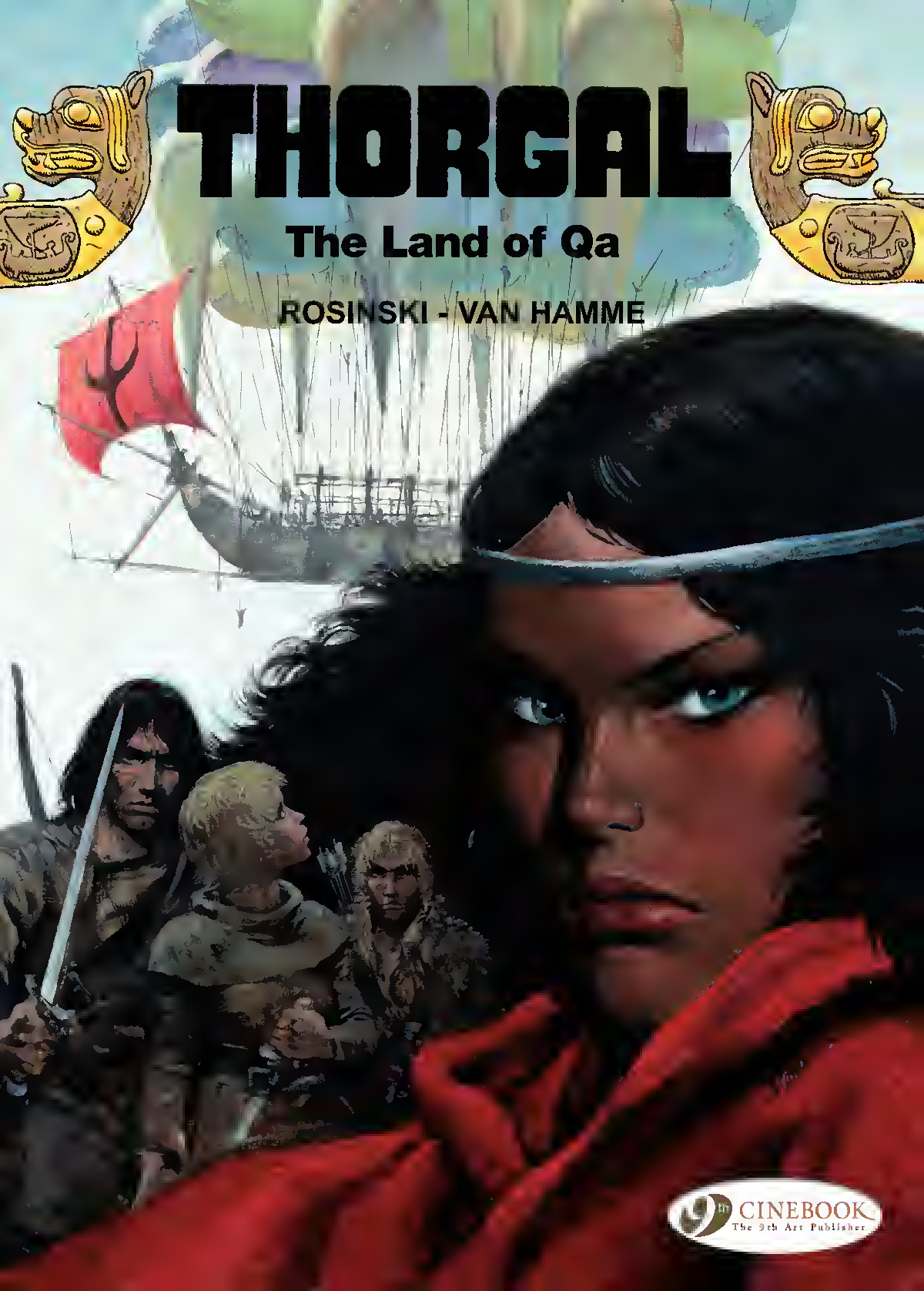
THORGAL
The Land of Qa
ROSINSKI - VAN HAMME
CINEBOOK
The 9th Art Publisher

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THORGAL

The Land of Qa

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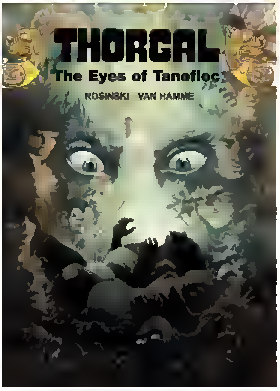
This two-volume book includes:



With the authors' consent, and in order not to upset our more sensitive readers, certain illustrations of this edition of *Thorgal* have been modified.
The original version of *Thorgal* is published in French by Le Lombard.

Original titles: Thorgal 10/Le pays Qâ - 11/Les Yeux de Tanatloc

Original edition: © Rosinski & Van Hamme, 1986, Les Editions du Lombard (Dargaud-Lombard SA),
www.lelombard.com

English translation: © 2008 Cinebook Ltd

Translator: Luke Spear
Lettering and text layout: Imadjinn sarl
Printed in Spain by Just Colour Graphic

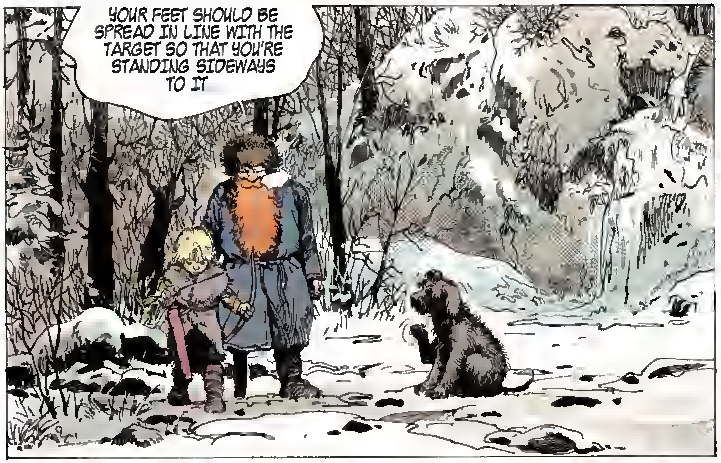
This edition first published in Great Britain in 2009 by
CINEBOOK Ltd
56 Beech Avenue
Canterbury, Kent
CT4 7TA
www.cinebook.com

A CIP catalogue record for this book
is available from the British Library

ISBN 978-1-905460-80-9

9th CINEBOOK
The 9th Art Publisher

YOUR POSITION'S NOT RIGHT, JOLAN..


YOUR FEET SHOULD BE SPREAD IN LINE WITH THE TARGET SO THAT YOU'RE STANDING SIDEWAYS TO IT

THEN, ARCHING YOURSELF, SLOWLY PULL BACK ON YOUR BOW UNTIL YOUR THUMB COMES TO REST JUST UNDER YOUR CHIN AND THE STRING TOUCHES THE END OF YOUR NOSE..

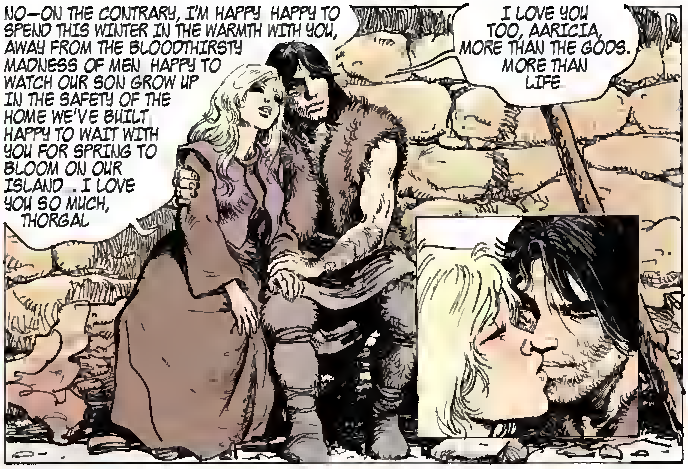
HOLD YOUR BREATH... AND OPEN YOUR FINGERS

DINNER WILL SOON BE READY, TJALL. COULD YOU GO AND FIND JOLAN AND YOUR UNCLE? THEY SHOULD BE AT THE WATERFALL.

AT YOUR COMMAND, PRINCESS! I'M GOING, I'LL RUN.

I'LL FLYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYY
...Y.
HAHAHA! LOOKS LIKE HUNGER GIVES YOU WINGS!
THE PROBLEM IS THAT HE'S STILL TOO YOUNG TO FLY BY HIMSELF, HAHA!
TREE FOOT, WHY DO YOU WANT TO LEAVE WITH TJALL TOMORROW?
BECAUSE I HAVE TO, JOLAN...
YOUR HOUSE IS NEARLY REBUILT AND IT'S HIGH TIME I WENT BACK TO LOOKING AFTER MY OWN BUSINESS. YOU UNDERSTAND?
OF COURSE I UNDERSTAND...
GRRRR
BUT I WOULD HAVE PREFERRED THAT YOU WERE STAYING HERE WITH US FOR THE WINTER. THAT WAY, YOU COULD HAVE CARRIED ON TEACHING ME TO SHOOT
YOUR FATHER CAN DO THAT A LOT BETTER THAN I CAN, YOUNG MAN. AND WE'LL SURELY SEE EACH OTHER AGAIN ONE OF THESE DAYS.
AH, THERE'S THE LAST ONE... IF MY STOMACH'S CRIES ARE ANYTHING TO GO BY, IT'S HIGH TIME TO HEAD BACK AND HONOUR THE CULINARY TALENTS OF THE BEAUTIFUL AARICIA
MUFF? COME ON, MUFF, WE'RE GOING... MUFF?
MUFF?!?

OUR FRIENDS ARE LEAVING US TOMORROW, THORGAL WE'LL BE JUST LIKE WE WERE BEFORE, JUST YOU, ME AND JOLAN AND THE ISLAND
DOES THAT WORRY YOU?


NO—ON THE CONTRARY, I'M HAPPY HAPPY TO SPEND THIS WINTER IN THE WARMTH WITH YOU, AWAY FROM THE BLOODTHIRSTY MADNESS OF MEN HAPPY TO WATCH OUR SON GROW UP IN THE SAFETY OF THE HOME WE'VE BUILT HAPPY TO WAIT WITH YOU FOR SPRING TO BLOOM ON OUR ISLAND . I LOVE YOU SO MUCH, THORGAL
I LOVE YOU TOO, AARICIA, MORE THAN THE GODS. MORE THAN LIFE

JOLAAAAN... TREE FOOOOOT!...

IS . IS HE DEAD?
NO, JUST UNCONSCIOUS BUT WHAT COULD HAVE DONE THIS?..

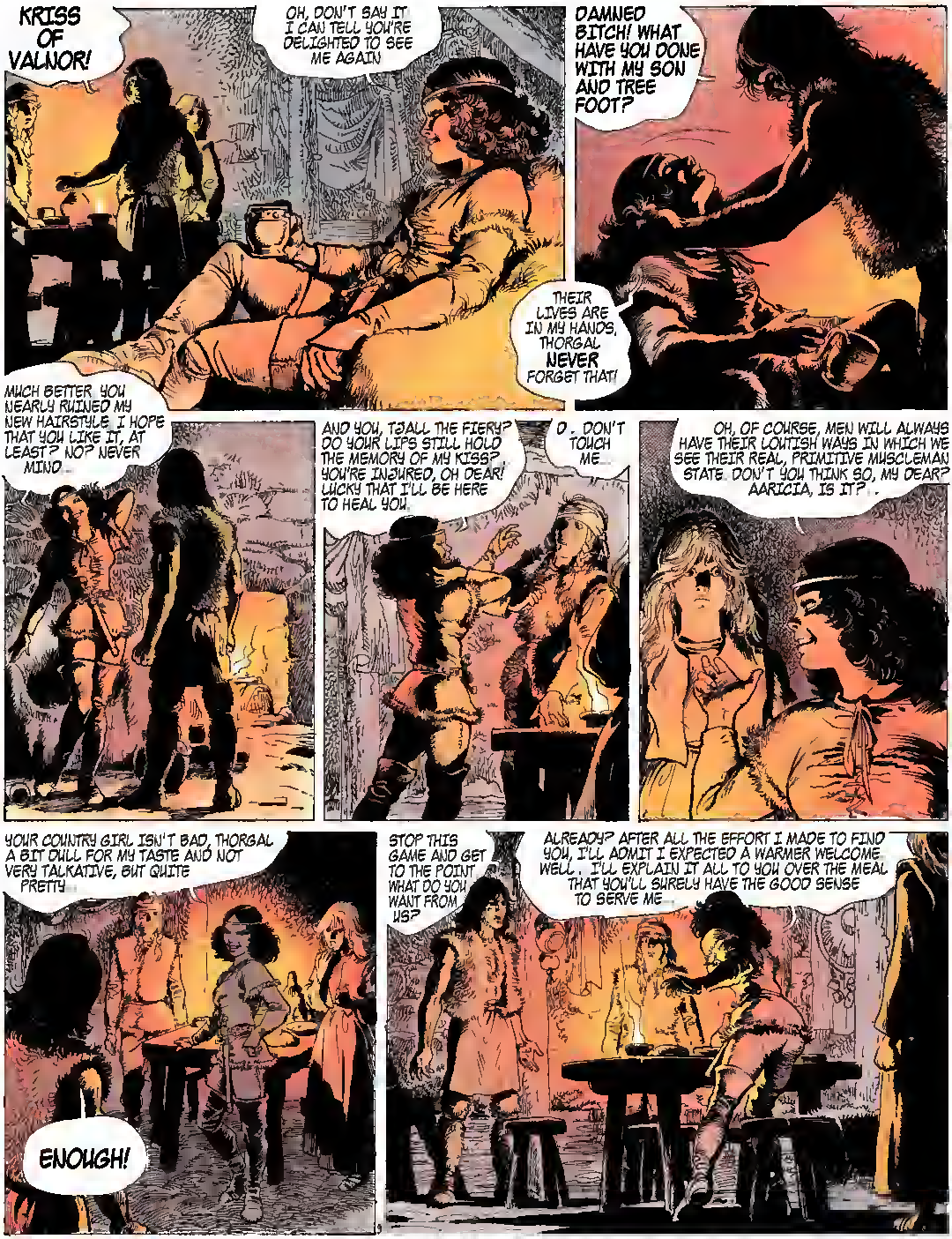
TREE FOOT! LOOK OUT!...

RUN, JOLAN! GO AND WARN THOR... OW!...
DON'T... DON'T COME ANY CLOSER OR I'LL... I'LL...
THORGAL! THORGAL! HELP!
!?

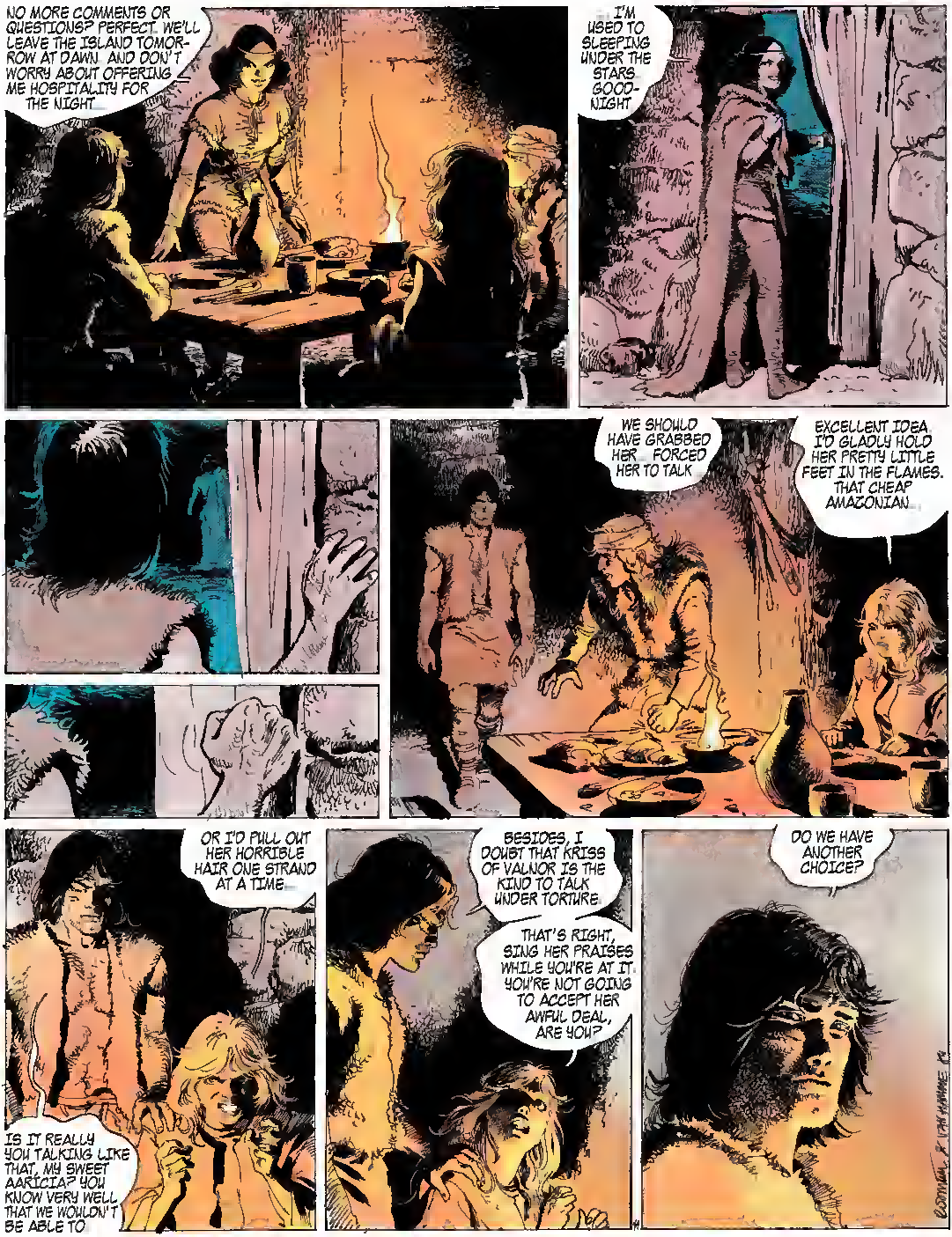
THESE TRACKS COME FROM THE SEA AT LEAST THREE OR FOUR MEN... FRIEND OR FOE?
AAAAAAH
TREE FOOT! JOLAN! WHERE ARE YOU?...
?!?

STOP, BAND OF SCUM! LET MY FRIENDS GO, AND GET OUT OF HERE NOW!
FLAOG RASHN! GLADI!
DID YOU HEAR ME!? WATCH YOUR HIDES, CURSED PIRATES!
YOU DON'T KNOW WHO YOU'VE BEEN FOOLISH ENOUGH TO ATTACK!...
BUT STILL IT BOTHERS ME A LITTLE THAT JOLAN WON'T HAVE ANYONE TO PLAY WITH. IT'S NOT GOOD FOR A LITTLE BOY TO BE ALONE. REMEMBER ALINOE?
HOW CAN I FORGET HIM? I SEE ONLY ONE SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM.
YOU'D LIKE TO HAVE ANOTHER CHILD, IS THAT IT?
MM HMM... YOU KNOW, IT COULD BE TIME TO THINK ABOUT IT...
IT WOULD BE BORN NEXT AUTUMN, AND WE COULD...
THORGAL...
??

THOSE STINKING, DIRTY MAGGOTS! THEY PREPARED THEIR ATTACK WELL!
WE HAVE TO DO SOMETHING, IN HEAVEN'S NAME! FOLLOW THEM! STOP THEM!
WE CAN'T DO ANYTHING, AARICIA...
NOTHING FOR NOW...
THEY'VE PROBABLY HEADED BACK TO A SHIP WAITING FOR THEM AT SEA. BY THE TIME I'VE REPAIRED MY BOAT, THEY'LL BE FAR AWAY.
MY POOR LITTLE BOY.
WHY, THORGAL? WHY HAVE THOSE BRUTES COME TO TAKE AWAY JOLAN AND TREE FOOT? WHAT COULD THEY WANT?
I HAVE NO IDEA
BUT I'M ALMOST CERTAIN THAT JOLAN IS IN NO DANGER.
WHAT MAKES YOU SAY THAT? HOW CAN YOU BE SURE?
BECAUSE OF MUFF. IF THOSE MEN REALLY WANTED TO HURT JOLAN, THEY WOULDN'T HAVE GONE TO THE TROUBLE OF TAKING HIS DOG.
WELL REASONED, THORGAL.
YOUR SON IS AT NO RISK, INDEED. AT LEAST, FOR AS LONG AS I SAY SO.
?


KRISS OF VALNOR!
OH, DON'T SAY IT. I CAN TELL YOU'RE DELIGHTED TO SEE ME AGAIN
DAMNED BITCH! WHAT HAVE YOU DONE WITH MY SON AND TREE FOOT?
THEIR LIVES ARE IN MY HANDS, THORGAL NEVER FORGET THAT!
MUCH BETTER. YOU NEARLY RUINED MY NEW HAIRSTYLE. I HOPE THAT YOU LIKE IT, AT LEAST? NO? NEVER MIND...
AND YOU, TJALL THE FIERY? DO YOUR LIPS STILL HOLD THE MEMORY OF MY KISS? YOU'RE INJURED, OH DEAR! LUCKY THAT I'LL BE HERE TO HEAL YOU.
O... DON'T TOUCH ME...
OH, OF COURSE, MEN WILL ALWAYS HAVE THEIR LOUTISH WAYS IN WHICH WE SEE THEIR REAL, PRIMITIVE MUSCLEMAN STATE. DON'T YOU THINK SO, MY DEAR? AARICIA, IS IT?...
YOUR COUNTRY GIRL ISN'T BAD, THORGAL A BIT DULL FOR MY TASTE AND NOT VERY TALKATIVE, BUT QUITE PRETTY...
ENOUGH!
STOP THIS GAME AND GET TO THE POINT. WHAT DO YOU WANT FROM US?
ALREADY? AFTER ALL THE EFFORT I MADE TO FIND YOU, I'LL ADMIT I EXPECTED A WARMER WELCOME. WELL... I'LL EXPLAIN IT ALL TO YOU OVER THE MEAL THAT YOU'LL SURELY HAVE THE GOOD SENSE TO SERVE ME...

IT'S VERY SIMPLE. A RICH AND POWERFUL PERSON GAVE ME A MISSION. A DANGEROUS ONE, OF COURSE. NEARLY IMPOSSIBLE. BUT IF I'M SUCCESSFUL, THE COMPENSATION IS WORTH THE DIFFICULTIES, IT'S ENORMOUS. I LOVE GOLD AND THE CHALLENGE SO I ACCEPTED.
THE PROBLEM IS THAT ON MY OWN, I HAVE NO CHANCE OF COMPLETING THE MISSION. I WOULD NEED A CREW THAT WAS RELIABLE, SKILFUL AND CAPABLE OF FACING ANY RISK. I IMMEDIATELY THOUGHT OF YOU TWO. AND, AS YOU'RE HARDLY INTERESTED IN GOLD—AND IN ANY CASE I DON'T INTEND TO SHARE—I NEEDED TO FIND ANOTHER ARGUMENT TO PERSUADE YOU TO JOIN ME.
THERE'S NO SHORTAGE OF WELL-TRAINED, READY-FOR-ANYTHING MERCENARIES IN THE LAND.
TRUE. UNFORTUNATELY FOR YOU, YOU'RE A MUCH BETTER FIGHTER THAN THEY ARE, THORGAL.
AND WHAT'S MORE, YOU ARE HANDSOME, WHICH IS A BONUS.
AS FOR YOUNG TJALL, NICKNAMED FIERY, HE'S A GOOD ARCHER TOO. AND SOMETHING TELLS ME THAT HE'D BE READY TO FOLLOW ME DOWN TO THE FIRES OF HELL EVEN IF HIS UNCLE'S LIFE WASN'T AT STAKE. AM I WRONG, HANDSOME?
WHO GAVE YOU THIS MISSION? AND WHAT'S IT ABOUT?
YOU'LL LEARN IN DUE COURSE. TREE FOOT AND JOLAN WILL BE TREATED WELL THROUGHOUT THE DURATION OF OUR EXPEDITION. BUT I WILL BE THE ONLY ONE TO KNOW WHERE THEY ARE. WHICH MAKES THE SITUATION DELICIOUSLY SIMPLE.
NOT ONLY WILL YOU HAVE TO FOLLOW AND OBEY ME, BUT ALSO PROTECT ME IN ALL CIRCUMSTANCES. FOR IF SOMETHING WERE TO HAPPEN TO ME, YOU'D HAVE NO HOPE OF EVER SEEING YOUR MISSING FRIEND AND SON AGAIN.

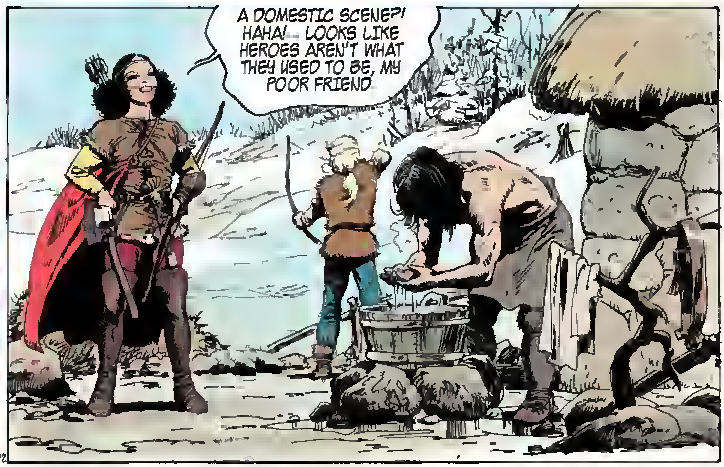

NO MORE COMMENTS OR QUESTIONS? PERFECT. WE'LL LEAVE THE ISLAND TOMORROW AT DAWN AND DON'T WORRY ABOUT OFFERING ME HOSPITALITY FOR THE NIGHT...
...I'M USED TO SLEEPING UNDER THE STARS... GOOD-NIGHT
WE SHOULD HAVE GRABBED HER... FORCED HER TO TALK
EXCELLENT IDEA I'D GLADLY HOLD HER PRETTY LITTLE FEET IN THE FLAMES. THAT CHEAP AMAZONIAN...
OR I'D PULL OUT HER HORRIBLE HAIR ONE STRAND AT A TIME...
IS IT REALLY YOU TALKING LIKE THAT, MY SWEET AARICIA? YOU KNOW VERY WELL THAT WE WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO
BESIDES, I DOUBT THAT KRISS OF VALNOR IS THE KIND TO TALK UNDER TORTURE
THAT'S RIGHT, SING HER PRAISES WHILE YOU'RE AT IT. YOU'RE NOT GOING TO ACCEPT HER AWFUL DEAL, ARE YOU?
DO WE HAVE ANOTHER CHOICE?

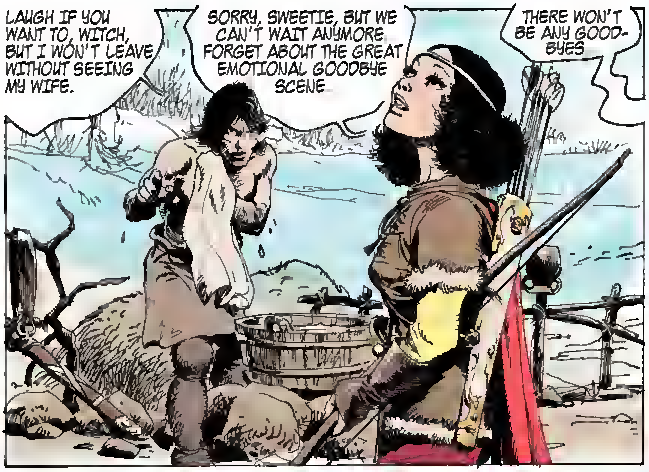
AARICIA, WHAT'S GOING ON? WHY AREN'T YOU ASLEEP?
HOW DO YOU EXPECT ME TO SLEEP WHEN YOU'RE LEAVING ONCE AGAIN?

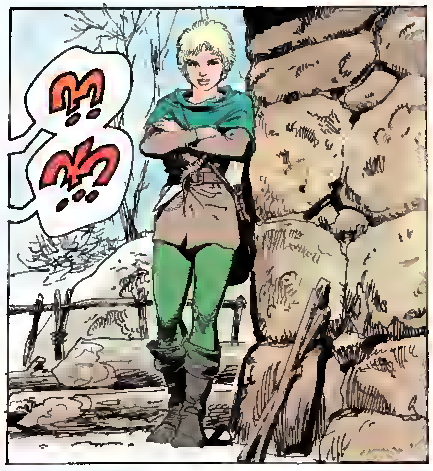
I HATE THAT WOMAN, THORGAL! I HATE HER!
ME, TOO, BUT...

BUT THAT WON'T STOP YOU FROM FOLLOWING HER LIKE A DOG FOLLOWS THE MASTER THAT BEATS IT!

DON'T STAY HERE... COME ON, YOU'LL CATCH COLD...
LEAVE ME ALONE! GO BACK TO BED; I WANT TO BE ALONE...


A DOMESTIC SCENE?! HAHA!... LOOKS LIKE HEROES AREN'T WHAT THEY USED TO BE, MY POOR FRIEND...

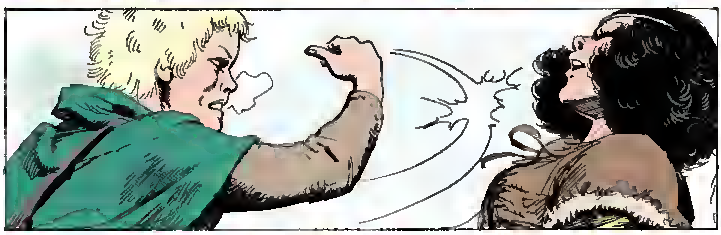

LAUGH IF YOU WANT TO, WITCH, BUT I WON'T LEAVE WITHOUT SEEING MY WIFE.
SORRY, SWEETIE, BUT WE CAN'T WAIT ANYMORE FORGET ABOUT THE GREAT EMOTIONAL GOODBYE SCENE
THERE WON'T BE ANY GOOD-BYES



BUT? WHAT'S? AARICIA, YOUR HAIR?...
WHAT, HANDSOME THORGAL, YOU DON'T LIKE MY NEW STYLE?
HA! HA! HA!

THAT'S TOO FUNNY! THE LITTLE COUNTRY GIRL WANTS TO COME WITH US! HAHAHA!

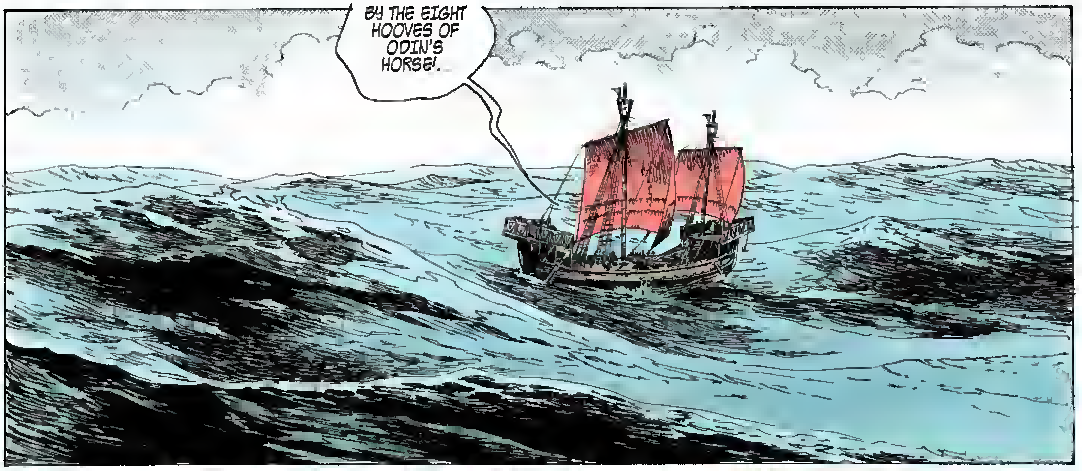
BECAUSE YOU'RE A GREAT WARRIOR, IS THAT IT? THE INTREPID MERCENARY WHO FEARS NOTHING...
I DO FEAR SOMETHING ONE DAY FINDING MYSELF WIPING KIDS' RUMPS...



THIS LITTLE RUMP-WIPING COUNTRY GIRL IS ALSO A VIKING PRINCESS, KRISS OF VALNOR NEVER FORGET THAT!

STOP!
I UNDERSTAND YOU, MY LOVE BUT KRISS IS RIGHT THERE'S NO WAY YOU'RE COMING WITH US.
DO YOU THINK I'M NOT AS STRONG OR AS BRAVE AS THAT WOMAN?
JOLAN ISN'T JUST YOUR SON... HE'S MINE, TOO
LET HER COME.
LET HER ACCOMPANY US IF SHE REALLY WANTS TO. THAT WAY, I WILL SEE HER QUAKE WITH FEAR, HEAR HER SCREAM WITH TERROR...
AND WHO KNOWS? I MIGHT EVEN HAVE THE PLEASURE OF SEEING HER DIE
NOW THAT THAT'S SETTLED, LET'S GO! WE'VE WASTED ENOUGH TIME ALREADY.
WELL, FOLKS. THIS EXPEDITION IS OFF TO AN EVENTFUL START.

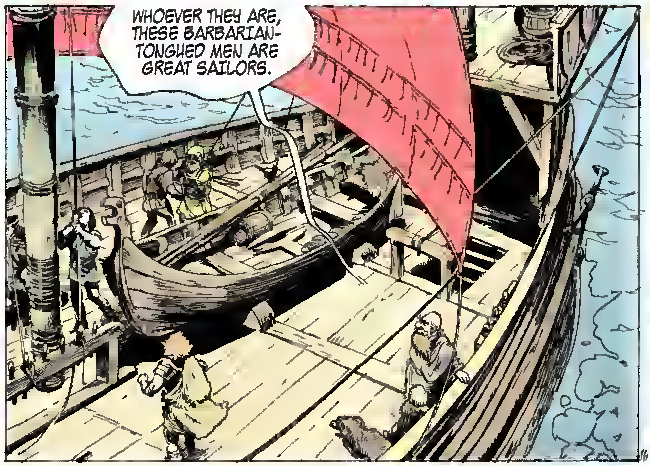
WHO ARE YOU SIGNALLING TO? I DON'T SEE ANY BOATS.
THAT'S BECAUSE YOU'RE NOT LOOKING IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION.
THERE IT IS!
?!
???
?!
15

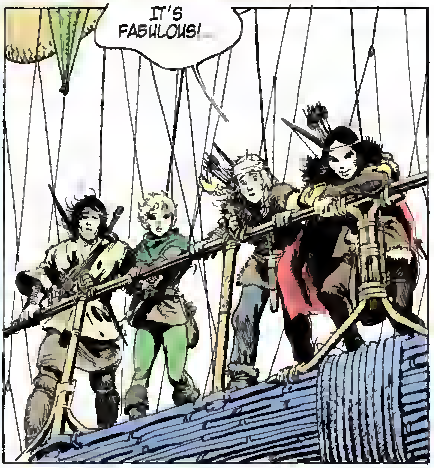

BY THE EIGHT HOOVES OF ODIN'S HORSE!

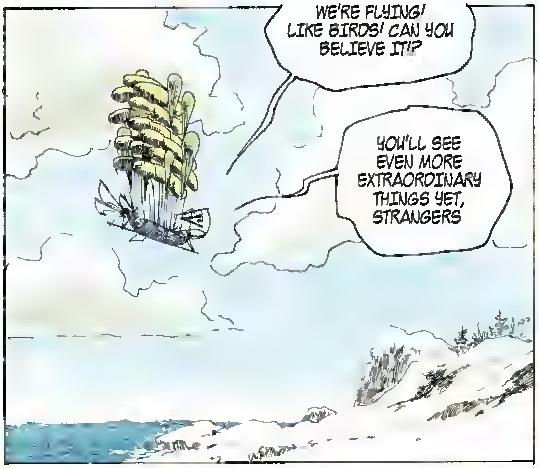
I'D GIVE MY WOODEN LEG TO KNOW WHERE THESE PIRATES ARE TAKING US AND WHY
AND I'D JUST LIKE TO GET THERE... MUFF IS GETTING SICKER BY THE DAY

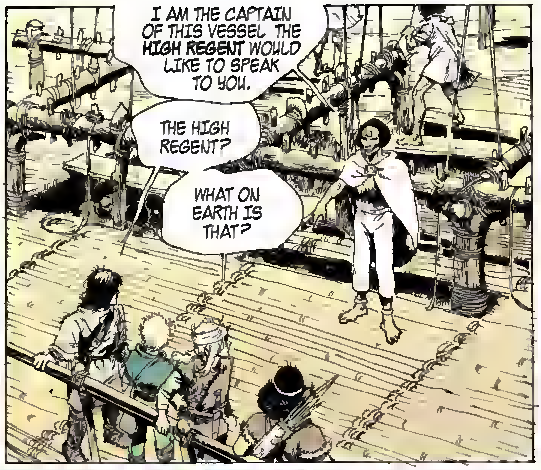
DID YOU KNOW THAT THE SEA WAS SO BIG?
I HAD HEARD ABOUT IT.

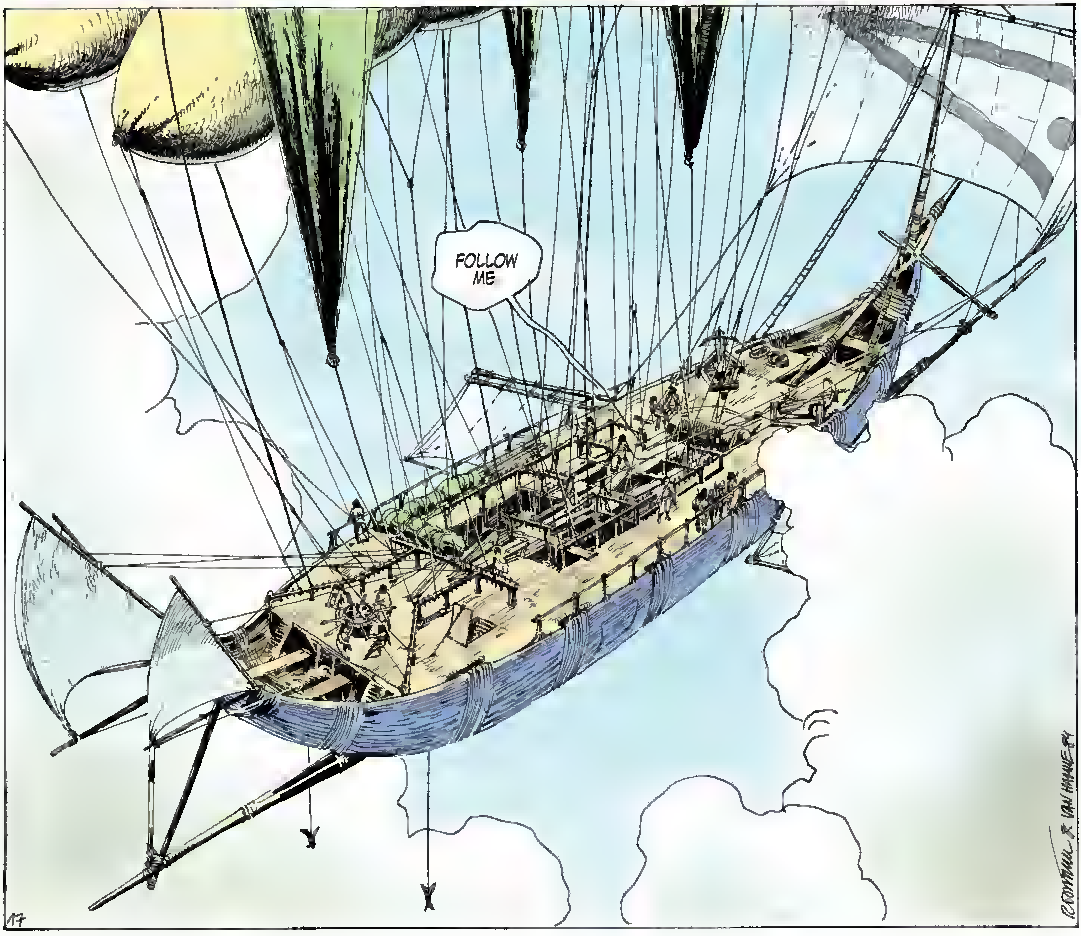
BUT I HAD NO IDEA THAT IT WAS POSSIBLE TO NAVIGATE FOR SO LONG WITHOUT SEEING LAND


WHOEVER THEY ARE, THESE BARBARIAN-TONGUED MEN ARE GREAT SAILORS.


IT'S FABULOUS!


WE'RE FLYING! LIKE BIRDS! CAN YOU BELIEVE IT!?
YOU'LL SEE EVEN MORE EXTRAORDINARY THINGS YET, STRANGERS

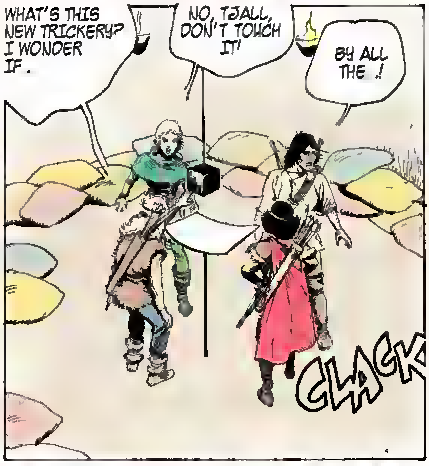

I AM THE CAPTAIN OF THIS VESSEL. THE HIGH REGENT WOULD LIKE TO SPEAK TO YOU.
THE HIGH REGENT?
WHAT ON EARTH IS THAT?


FOLLOW ME

TELL ME, CAPTAIN... WHAT IS THE POWERFUL MAGIC THAT MAKES YOUR SHIP FLY?
I DON'T KNOW, FRIEND IT'S THE GOD TANATLOC'S SECRET.

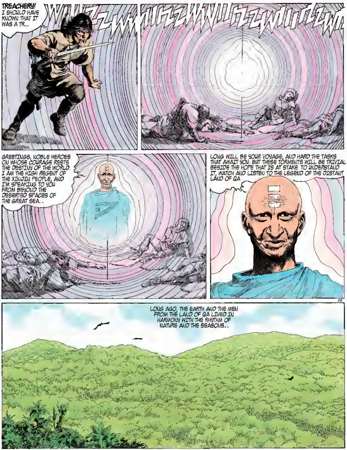
WE CAN ONLY STEER IT, THAT'S ALL.
OH... WELL, I HOPE THAT YOUR GOD TANATHING KNOWS WHAT HE'S DOING

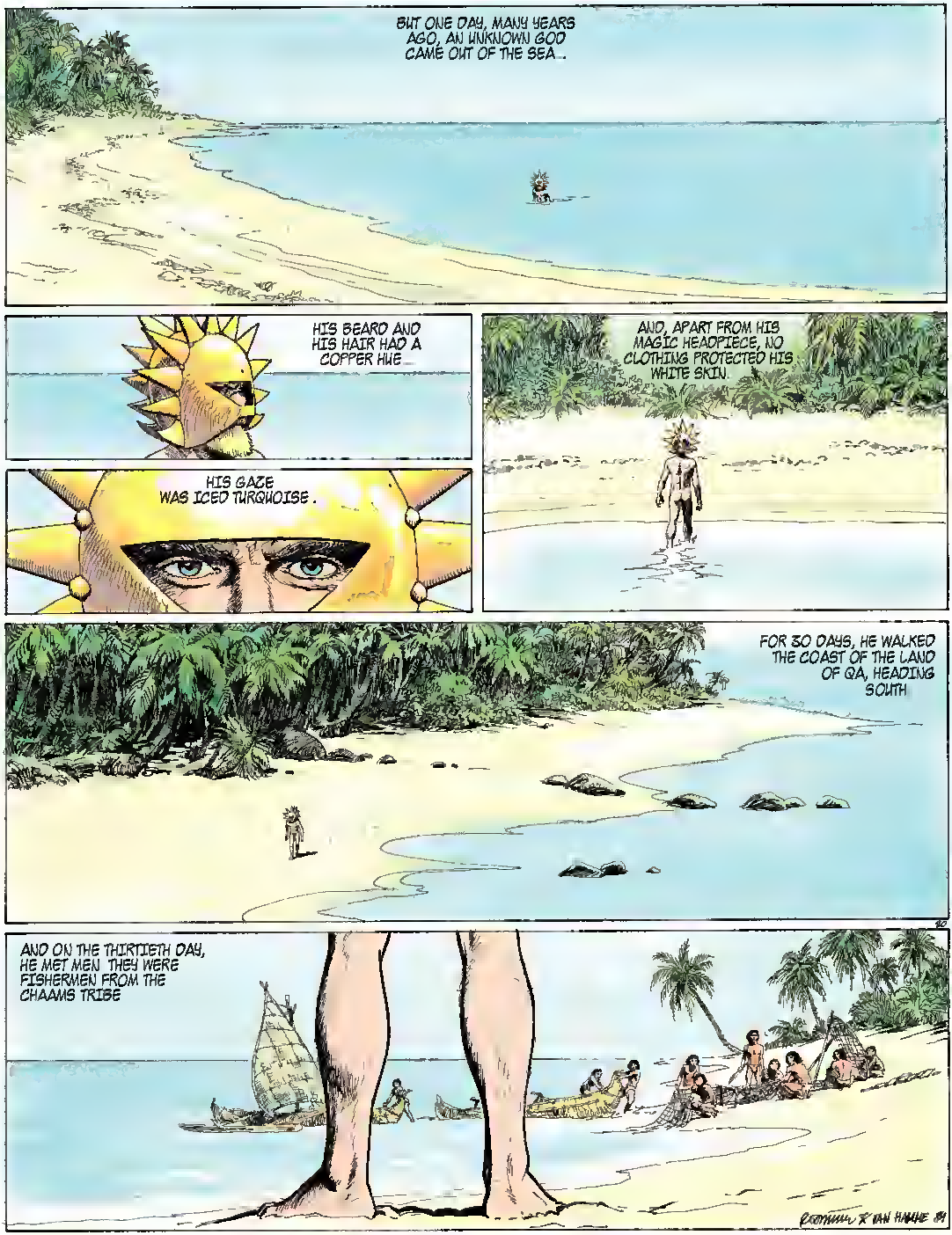
COME IN...
HEY! THERE'S NOBODY HERE..

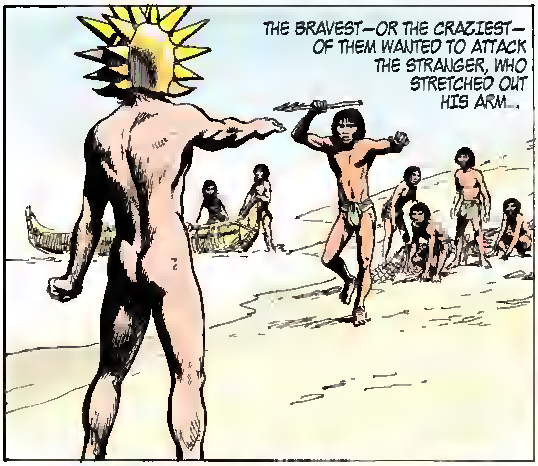

WHAT'S THIS NEW TRICKERY? I WONDER IF.
NO, TOALL, DON'T TOUCH IT!
BY ALL THE !
GLAGK

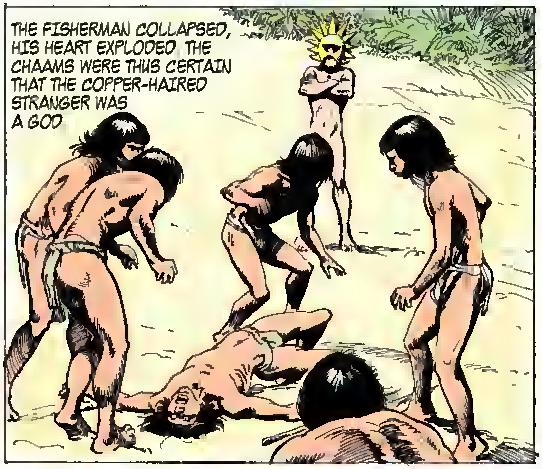
BY THOR'S LIGHTNING, OPEN THIS DOOR! OPEN IT OR I'LL BREAK IT!
WIIIZZW

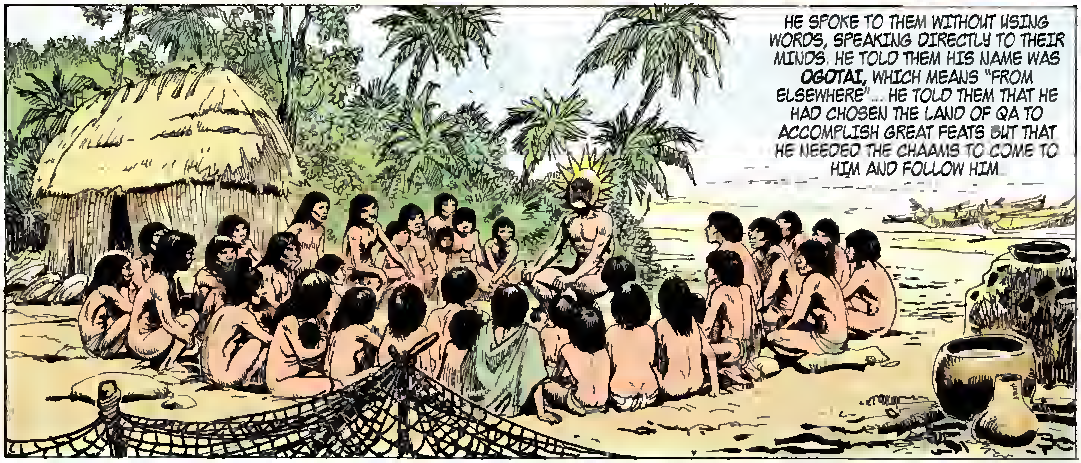
WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR? COME H...???
WIIIZZWIIIZZWIIIZZWIIIZZ

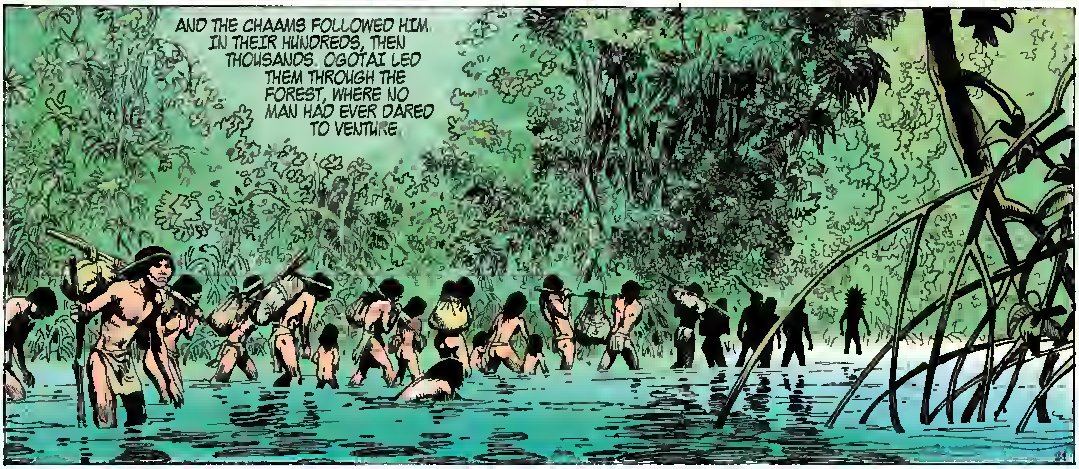

TREACHERY! I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN THAT IT WAS A TR...
WWIIIZZWWIIIZZWWIIIZZWWIIIZZWWIIIZZWW
GREETINGS, NOBLE HEROES ON WHOSE COURAGE RESTS THE DESTINY OF THE WORLD. I AM THE HIGH REGENT OF THE XINJIN PEOPLE, AND I'M SPEAKING TO YOU FROM BEYOND THE DESERTED SPACES OF THE GREAT SEA..
LONG WILL BE YOUR VOYAGE, AND HARD THE TASKS THAT AWAIT YOU. BUT THESE TORMENTS WILL BE TRIVIAL BESIDE THE HOPE THAT IS AT STAKE. TO UNDERSTAND IT, WATCH AND LISTEN TO THE LEGEND OF THE DISTANT LAND OF GA
LONG AGO, THE EARTH AND THE MEN FROM THE LAND OF GA LIVED IN HARMONY WITH THE RHYTHM OF NATURE AND THE SEASONS..


BUT ONE DAY, MANY YEARS AGO, AN UNKNOWN GOD CAME OUT OF THE SEA...
HIS BEARD AND HIS HAIR HAD A COPPER HUE...
HIS GAZE WAS ICED TURQUOISE.
AND, APART FROM HIS MAGIC HEADPIECE, NO CLOTHING PROTECTED HIS WHITE SKIN.
FOR 30 DAYS, HE WALKED THE COAST OF THE LAND OF QA, HEADING SOUTH.
AND ON THE THIRTIETH DAY, HE MET MEN. THEY WERE FISHERMEN FROM THE CHAAMS TRIBE

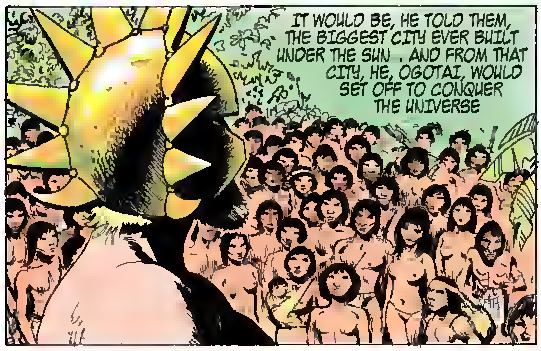

THE BRAVEST—OR THE CRAZIEST—OF THEM WANTED TO ATTACK THE STRANGER, WHO STRETCHED OUT HIS ARM...

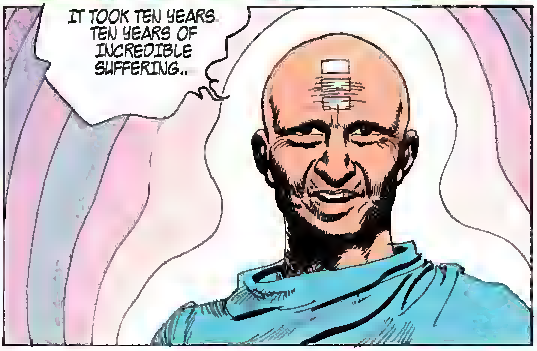

THE FISHERMAN COLLAPSED, HIS HEART EXPLODED. THE CHAAMS WERE THUS CERTAIN THAT THE COPPER-HAIRED STRANGER WAS A GOD.

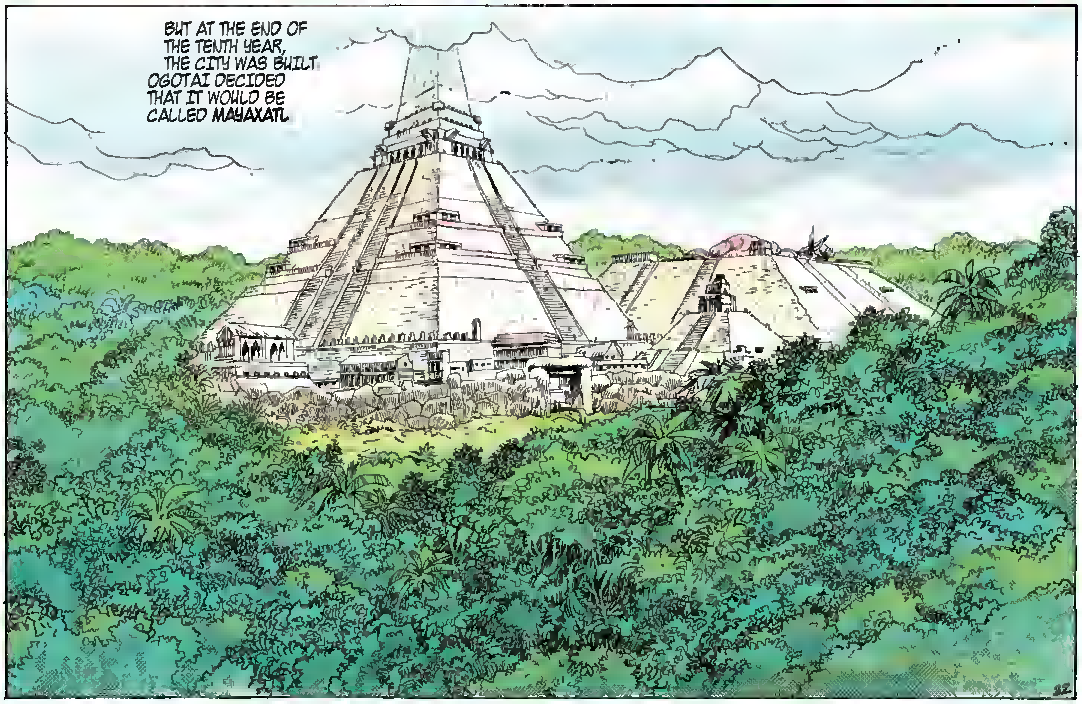

HE SPOKE TO THEM WITHOUT USING WORDS, SPEAKING DIRECTLY TO THEIR MINDS. HE TOLD THEM HIS NAME WAS **OGOTAI**, WHICH MEANS "FROM ELSEWHERE"... HE TOLD THEM THAT HE HAD CHOSEN THE LAND OF QA TO ACCOMPLISH GREAT FEATS BUT THAT HE NEEDED THE CHAAMS TO COME TO HIM AND FOLLOW HIM.


AND THE CHAAMS FOLLOWED HIM, IN THEIR HUNDREDS, THEN THOUSANDS. OGOTAI LED THEM THROUGH THE FOREST, WHERE NO MAN HAD EVER DARED TO VENTURE.

THERE, IN THE DEEPEST HEART OF THE WILD FOREST, HE SHOWED THE SPOT WHERE HIS TOWN WOULD BE BUILT.


IT WOULD BE, HE TOLD THEM, THE BIGGEST CITY EVER BUILT UNDER THE SUN . AND FROM THAT CITY, HE, OGOTAI, WOULD SET OFF TO CONQUER THE UNIVERSE

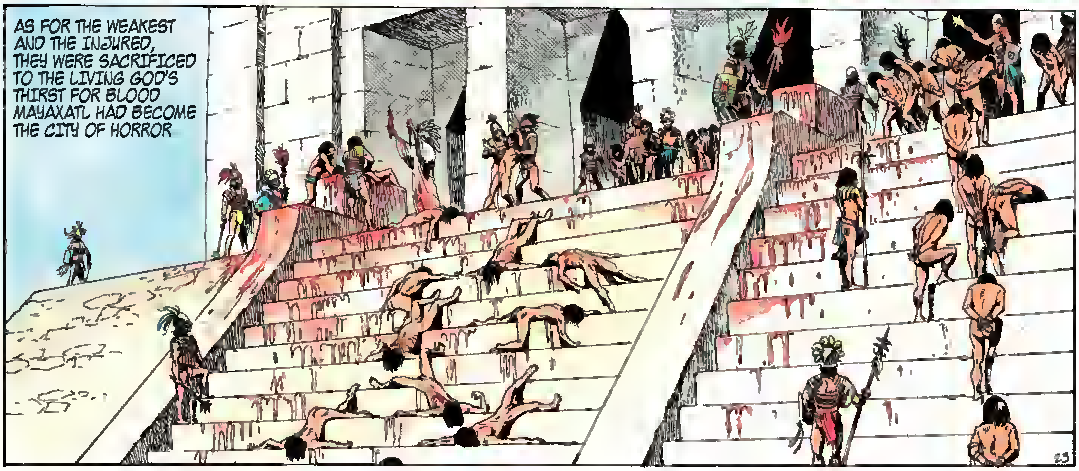

IT TOOK TEN YEARS. TEN YEARS OF INCREDIBLE SUFFERING..


BUT AT THE END OF THE TENTH YEAR, THE CITY WAS BUILT. OGOTAI DECIDED THAT IT WOULD BE CALLED MAYAXATL.

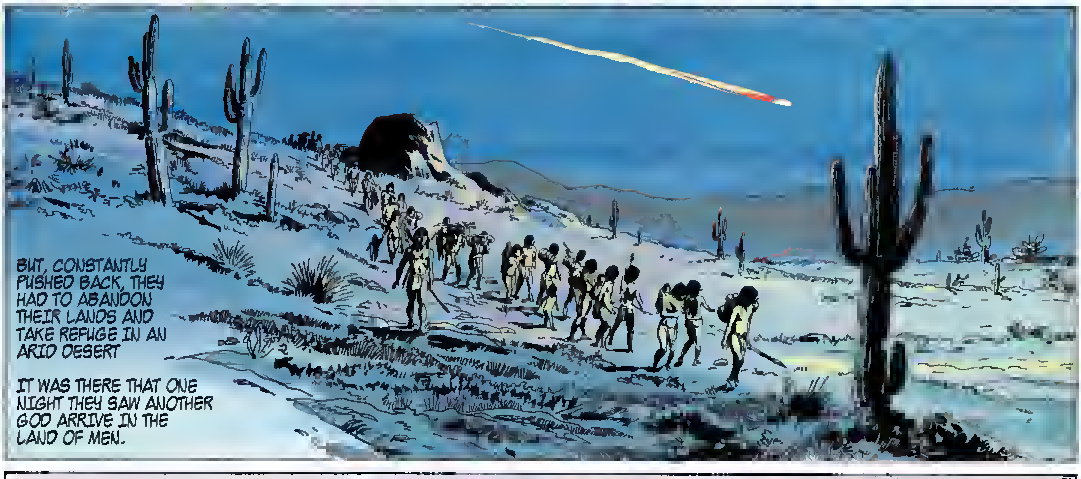
SO, OGOTAI TAUGHT THE CHAAMS THE ART OF WAR. HE HAD THEM MAKE NEW WEAPONS AND FLYING VESSELS AND HE SENT THEM OUT TO ASSAULT THE LAND OF QA.

FROM THE NORTH TO THE SOUTH AND FROM THE EAST TO THE WEST, THERE WAS NOTHING BUT FIRE AND MASSACRE, TERROR AND WAILING

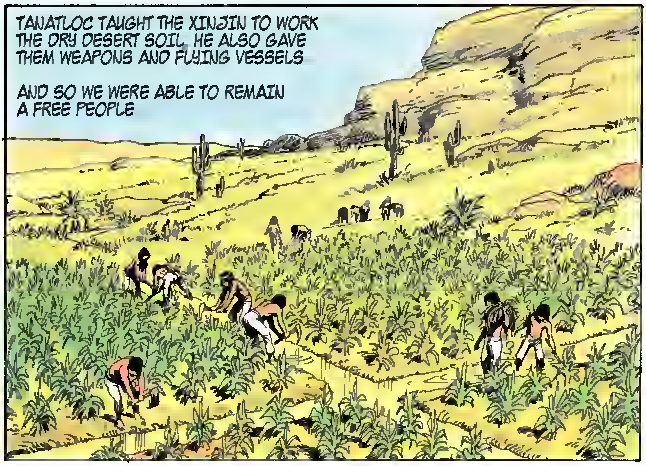
THOSE WHO SUBMITTED WERE ENLISTED IN OGOTAI'S ARMY. THE OTHERS WERE TAKEN AS SLAVES.

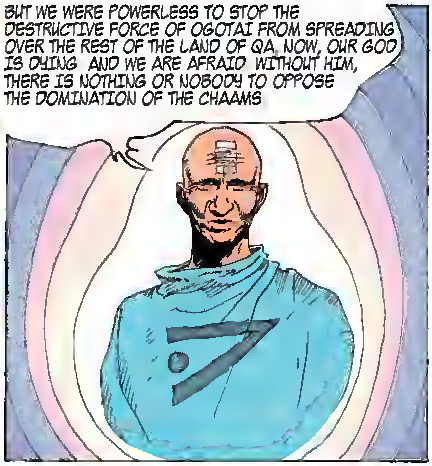

AS FOR THE WEAKEST AND THE INJURED, THEY WERE SACRIFICED TO THE LIVING GOD'S THIRST FOR BLOOD MAYAXATL HAD BECOME THE CITY OF HORROR

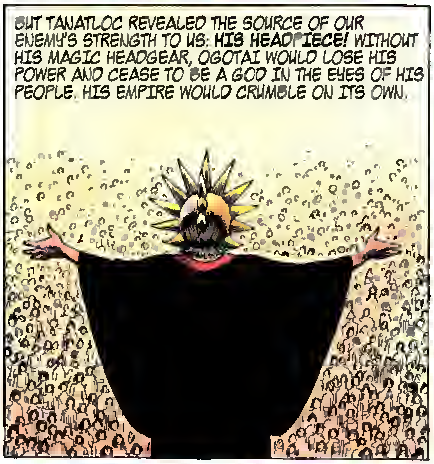
OF ALL THE TRIBES IN THE LAND OF QA, THE XINJIN WERE THE ONLY ONES TO RESIST THE OGOTAI HORDES.

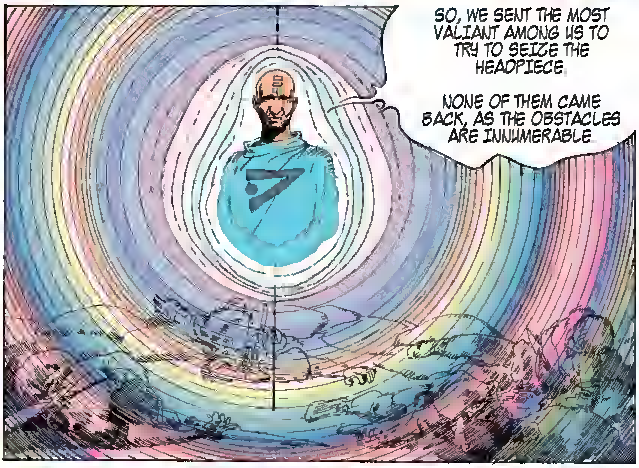

BUT, CONSTANTLY PUSHED BACK, THEY HAD TO ABANDON THEIR LANDS AND TAKE REFUGE IN AN ARID DESERT
IT WAS THERE THAT ONE NIGHT THEY SAW ANOTHER GOD ARRIVE IN THE LAND OF MEN.

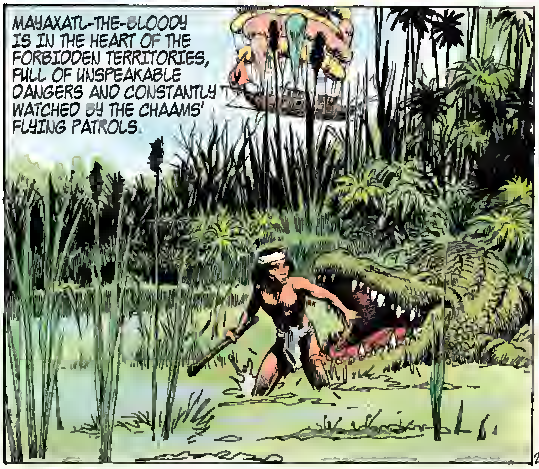
HE WAS AN OLD GOD AND HIS HAIR WAS WHITE LIKE SNOWY PEAKS. HE TOLD THE XINJIN TO CALL HIM TANATLOC, "THE ONE WHO SEEKS PEACE." HE EXPLAINED THAT HE HAD COME TO BE WITH THEM TO FIGHT AGAINST OGOTAI, WHO WAS AN EVIL GOD.
SO, THE XINJIN PEOPLE FELT THEIR HOPE WAS REBORN


TANATLOC TAUGHT THE XINJIN TO WORK THE DRY DESERT SOIL. HE ALSO GAVE THEM WEAPONS AND FLYING VESSELS
AND SO WE WERE ABLE TO REMAIN A FREE PEOPLE

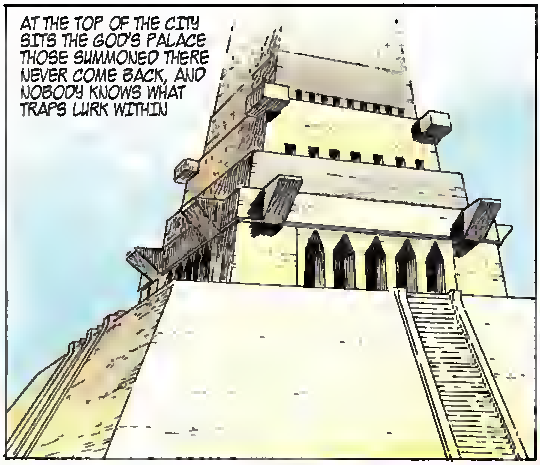

BUT WE WERE POWERLESS TO STOP THE DESTRUCTIVE FORCE OF OGOTAI FROM SPREADING OVER THE REST OF THE LAND OF QA. NOW, OUR GOD IS DYING AND WE ARE AFRAID WITHOUT HIM, THERE IS NOTHING OR NOBODY TO OPPOSE THE DOMINATION OF THE CHAAMS

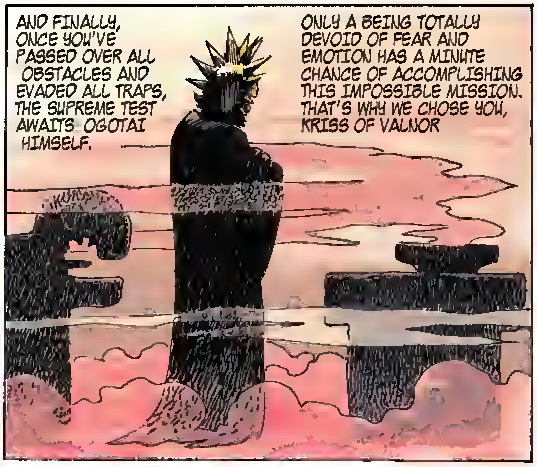

BUT TANATLOC REVEALED THE SOURCE OF OUR ENEMY'S STRENGTH TO US: HIS HEADPIECE! WITHOUT HIS MAGIC HEADGEAR, OGOTAI WOULD LOSE HIS POWER AND CEASE TO BE A GOD IN THE EYES OF HIS PEOPLE. HIS EMPIRE WOULD CRUMBLE ON ITS OWN.


SO, WE SENT THE MOST VALIANT AMONG US TO TRY TO SEIZE THE HEADPIECE.
NONE OF THEM CAME BACK, AS THE OBSTACLES ARE INNUMERABLE

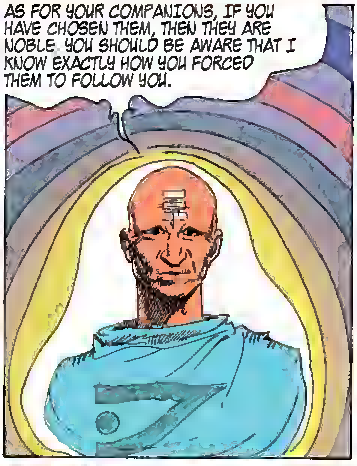

MAYAXATL-THE-BLOODY IS IN THE HEART OF THE FORBIDDEN TERRITORIES, FULL OF UNSPEAKABLE DANGERS AND CONSTANTLY WATCHED BY THE CHAAMS' FLYING PATROLS.

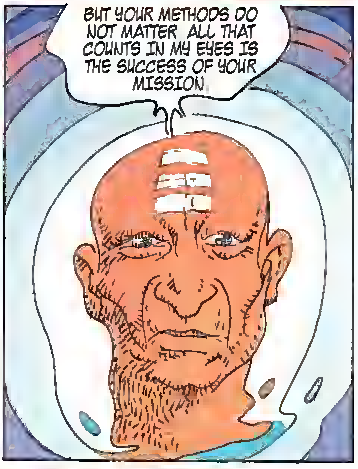
THEREFORE, THE CITY ITSELF MUST BE PENETRATED. DOZENS OF WARRIOR RACES LIVE SHOULDER TO SHOULDER, AND ITS STREETS ARE MORE DANGEROUS THAN A SNAKE PIT.

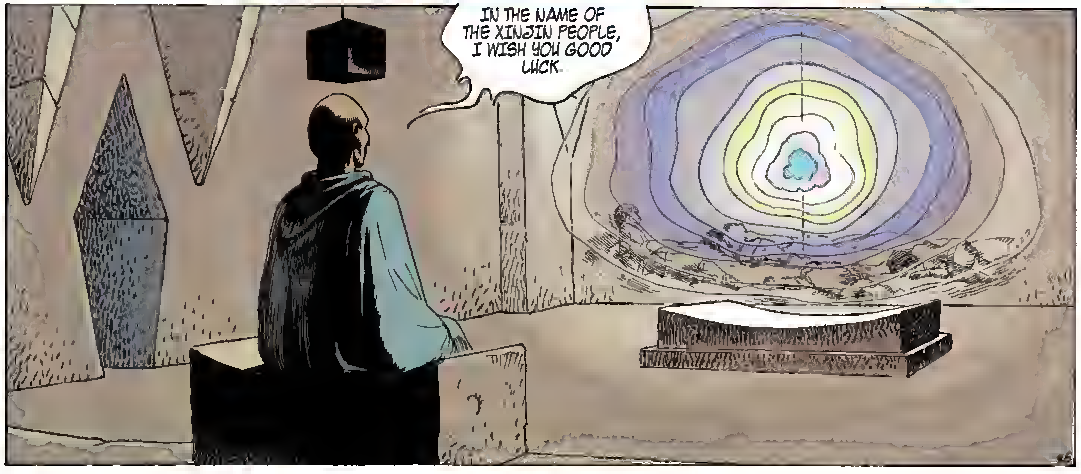

AT THE TOP OF THE CITY SITS THE GOD'S PALACE. THOSE SUMMONED THERE NEVER COME BACK, AND NOBODY KNOWS WHAT TRAPS LURK WITHIN.

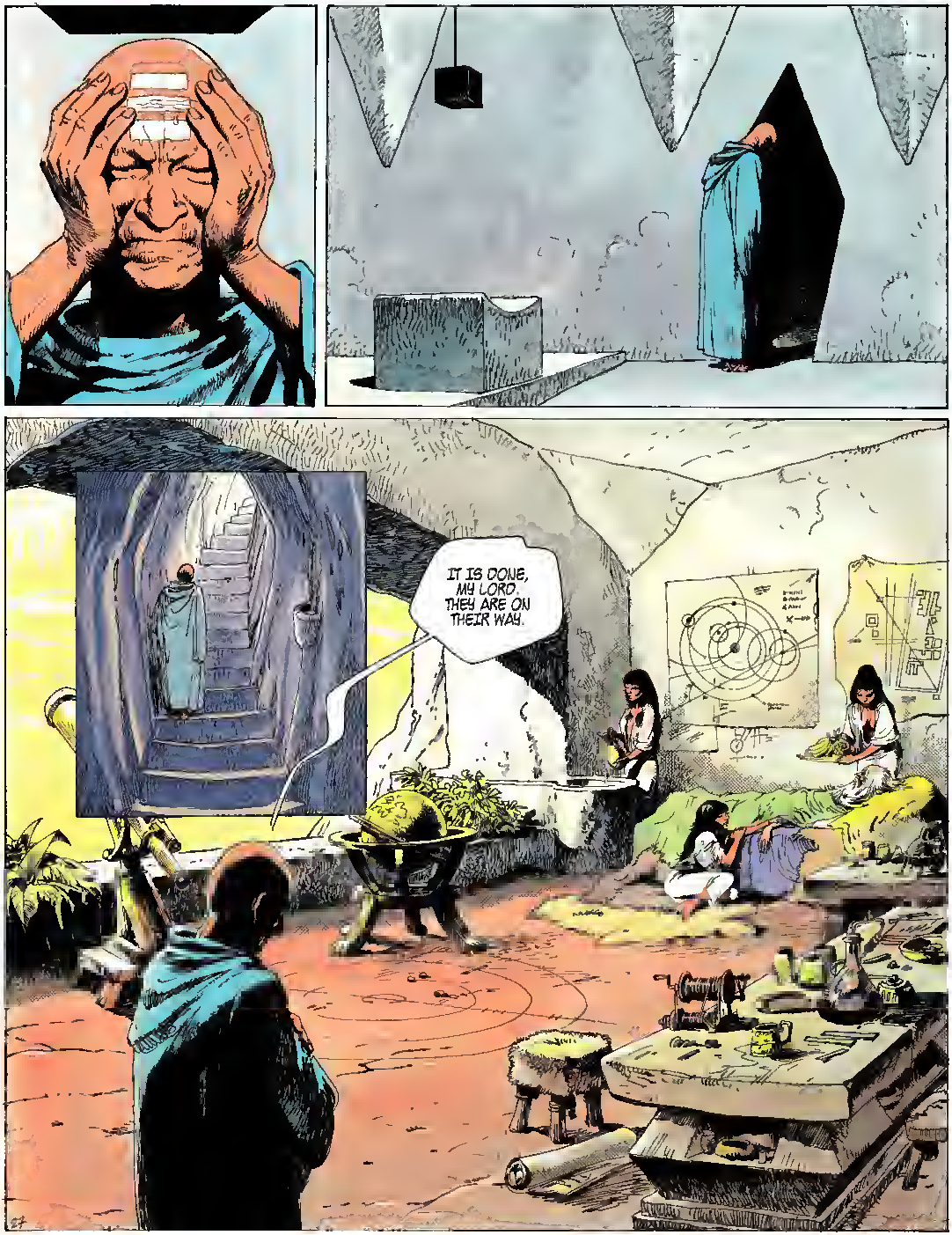

AND FINALLY, ONCE YOU'VE PASSED OVER ALL OBSTACLES AND EVADED ALL TRAPS, THE SUPREME TEST AWAITS: OGOTAI HIMSELF.
ONLY A BEING TOTALLY DEVOID OF FEAR AND EMOTION HAS A MINUTE CHANCE OF ACCOMPLISHING THIS IMPOSSIBLE MISSION. THAT'S WHY WE CHOSE YOU, KRISS OF VALNOR.

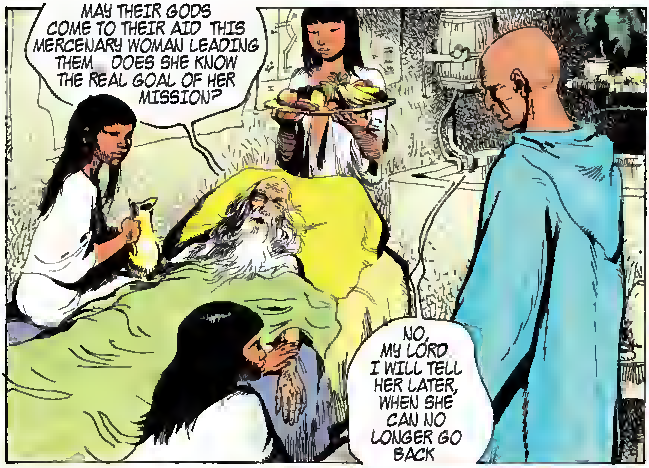
IF YOU FAIL, YOU WILL FACE CERTAIN DEATH. BUT IF YOU SUCCEED, WE WILL GIVE YOU AS MUCH GOLD AS YOU CAN CARRY IN A CHARIOT HITCHED TO TWO OXEN.

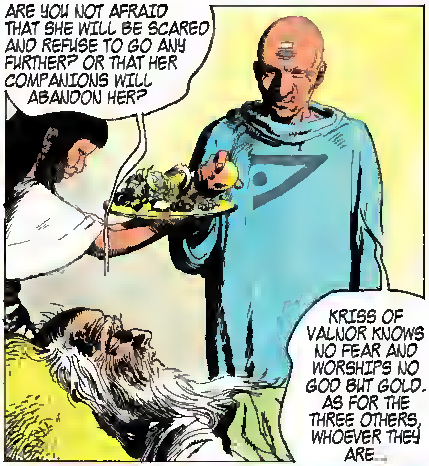

AS FOR YOUR COMPANIONS, IF YOU HAVE CHOSEN THEM, THEN THEY ARE NOBLE. YOU SHOULD BE AWARE THAT I KNOW EXACTLY HOW YOU FORCED THEM TO FOLLOW YOU.

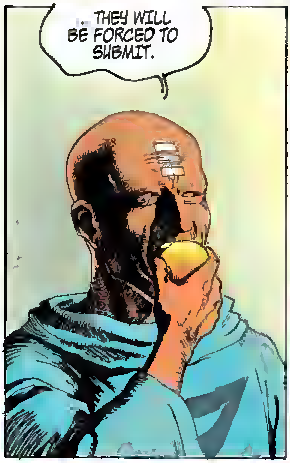

BUT YOUR METHODS DO NOT MATTER. ALL THAT COUNTS IN MY EYES IS THE SUCCESS OF YOUR MISSION.

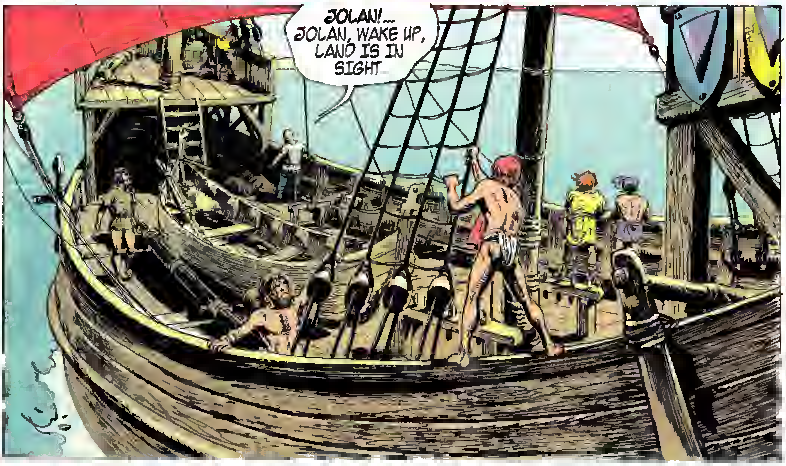

IN THE NAME OF THE XINJIN PEOPLE, I WISH YOU GOOD LUCK.

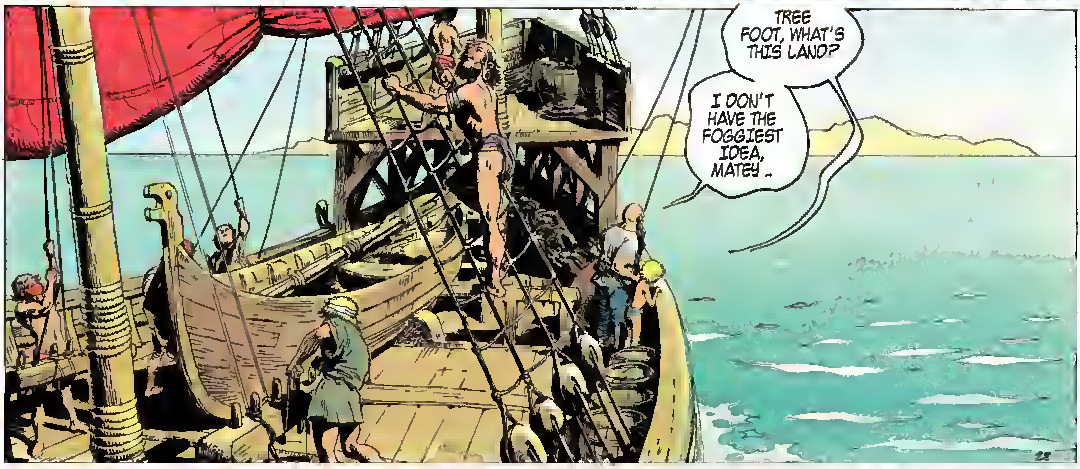

IT IS DONE, MY LORD. THEY ARE ON THEIR WAY.

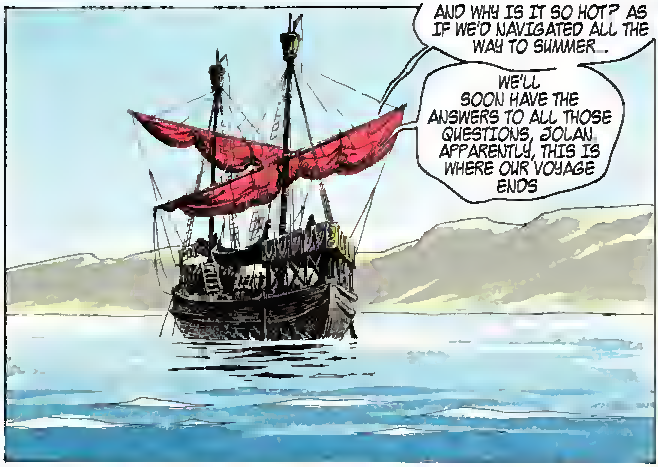

MAY THEIR GODS COME TO THEIR AID. THIS MERCENARY WOMAN LEADING THEM... DOES SHE KNOW THE REAL GOAL OF HER MISSION?
NO, MY LORD. I WILL TELL HER LATER, WHEN SHE CAN NO LONGER GO BACK

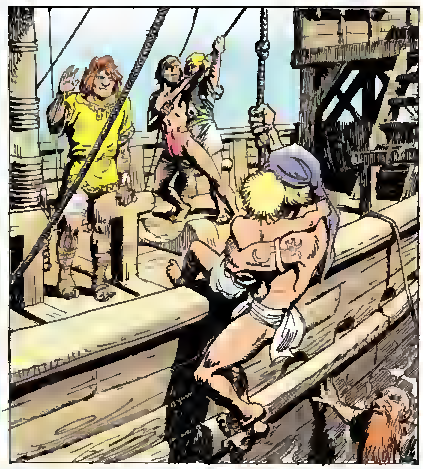

ARE YOU NOT AFRAID THAT SHE WILL BE SCARED AND REFUSE TO GO ANY FURTHER? OR THAT HER COMPANIONS WILL ABANDON HER?
KRISS OF VALNOR KNOWS NO FEAR AND WORSHIPS NO GOD BUT GOLD. AS FOR THE THREE OTHERS, WHOEVER THEY ARE...

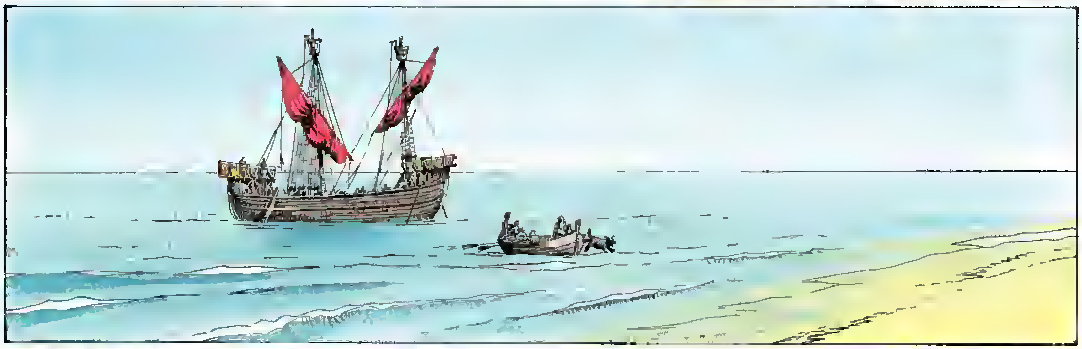

... THEY WILL BE FORCED TO SUBMIT.

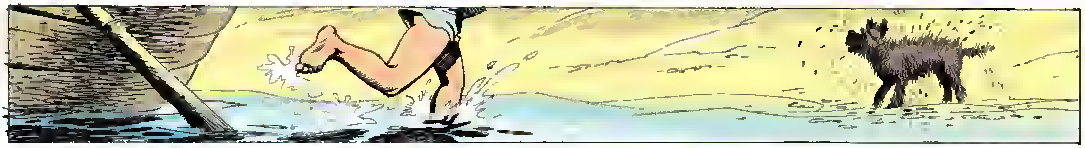

JOLAN!... JOLAN, WAKE UP, LAND IS IN SIGHT

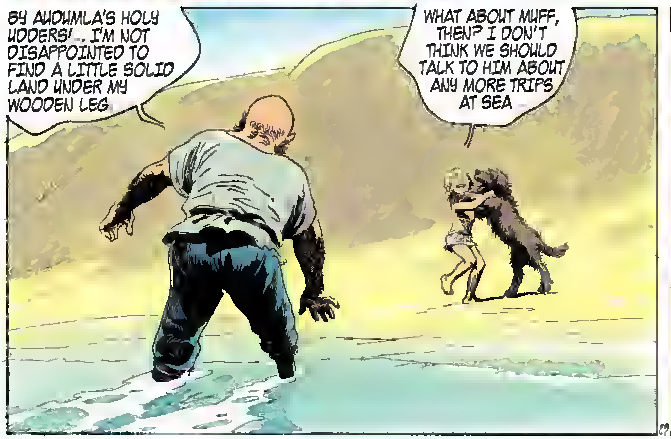

TREE FOOT, WHAT'S THIS LAND?
I DON'T HAVE THE FOGGIEST IDEA, MATEY...


AND WHY IS IT SO HOT? AS IF WE'D NAVIGATED ALL THE WAY TO SUMMER...
WE'LL SOON HAVE THE ANSWERS TO ALL THOSE QUESTIONS, JOLAN. APPARENTLY, THIS IS WHERE OUR VOYAGE ENDS





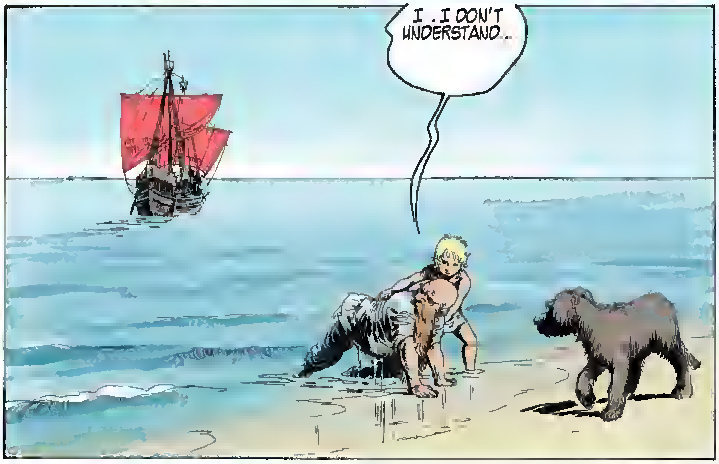


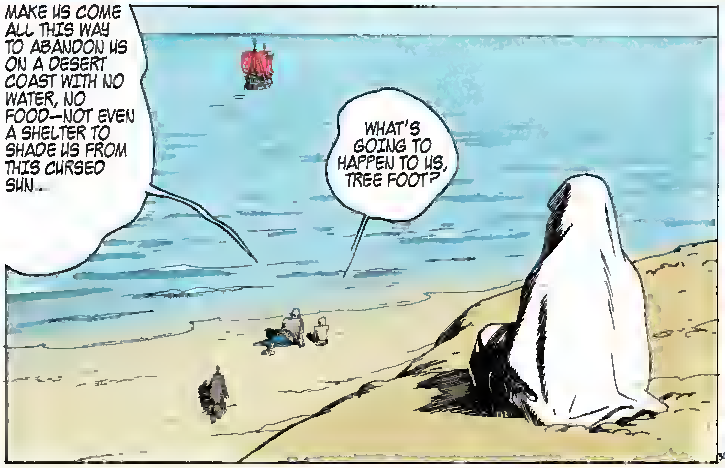

BY AUDUMLA'S HOLY UDDERS!... I'M NOT DISAPPOINTED TO FIND A LITTLE SOLID LAND UNDER MY WOODEN LEG.
WHAT ABOUT MUFF, THEN? I DON'T THINK WE SHOULD TALK TO HIM ABOUT ANY MORE TRIPS AT SEA.

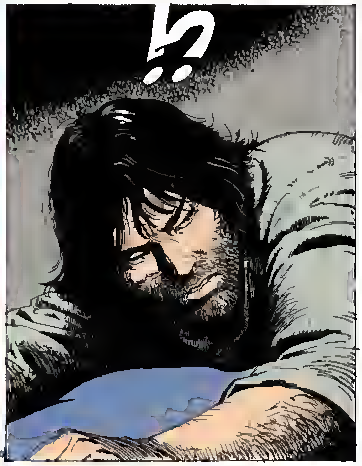
OH!... TREE FOOT! LOOK!

THEY... THEY'RE GOING?!

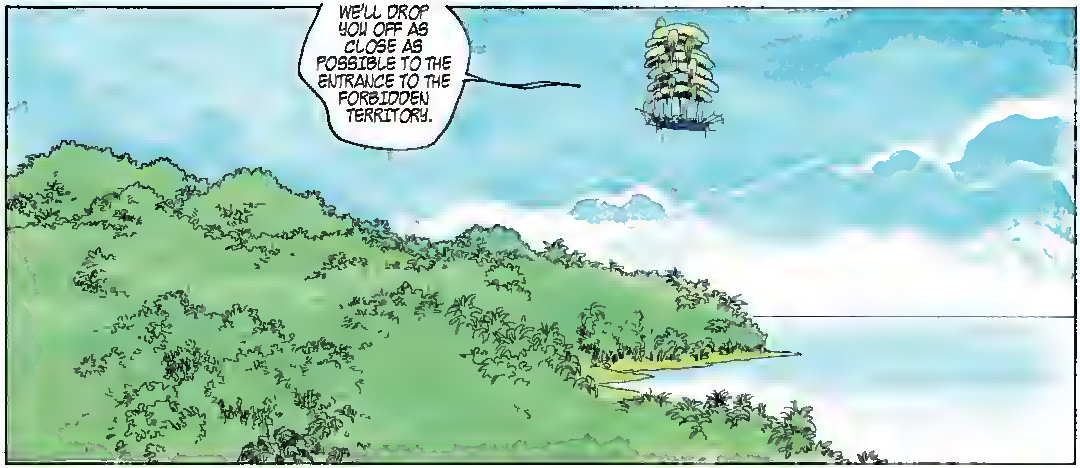
HEY, COME BACK, YOU BAND OF VILLAINS! DON'T LEAVE US HERE ALONE!...

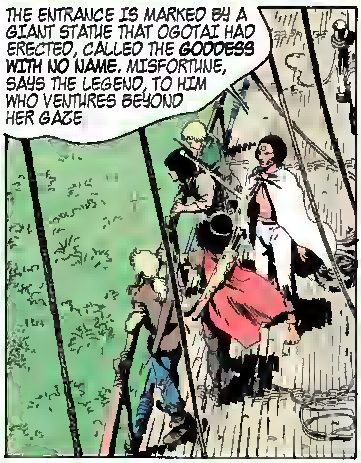

I . I DON'T UNDERSTAND..


MAKE US COME ALL THIS WAY TO ABANDON US ON A DESERT COAST WITH NO WATER, NO FOOD—NOT EVEN A SHELTER TO SHADE US FROM THIS CURSED SUN..
WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN TO US, TREE FOOT?


!?

AARICIA, DID... DID I FALL ASLEEP?
WE ALL DID, MY LOVE FOR SEVERAL DAYS, IF THE LENGTH OF YOUR BEARD IS ANYTHING TO GO BY.
AND, YOU KNOW, WE'RE NOT HUNGRY AT ALL. IT'S AS IF WE WERE FED DURING OUR SLUMBER.
WHAT A STRANGE FEELING... THE LIGHT... AND THEN THE DREAM... OGOTAI... THE TOWN IN THE FOREST... THE MASSACRES... THE XINJIN...
THAT WASN'T A DREAM, HONEY.
IT WAS THE EXPLANATION OF OUR MISSION. THE MISSION THAT WILL MAKE ME RICHER THAN I EVER DARED TO IMAGINE. A WHOLE CHARIOT OF GOLD, CAN YOU BELIEVE IT!?
CURSE YOUR GREED THAT LED US INTO THIS MADNESS, KRISS OF VALNOR!...
COME ON, NOW... THERE MUST BE A GOOD DEAL OF EXAGGERATION AND LEGEND IN THE STORY...
AND FROM WHAT I HEAR, YOU'VE SUCCEEDED IN FEATS THAT WERE JUST AS DANGEROUS, ISN'T THAT TRUE? UNLESS YOU'RE WORRIED ABOUT YOUR LITTLE DARLING?
??
THIS TIME I'LL STRANGLE YOU WITH MY OWN HANDS...
STOP!
SAVE YOUR FIGHTING ENERGY FOR THE TESTS THAT AWAIT YOU, STRANGERS. WE'VE SPOTTED THE LAND OF QA

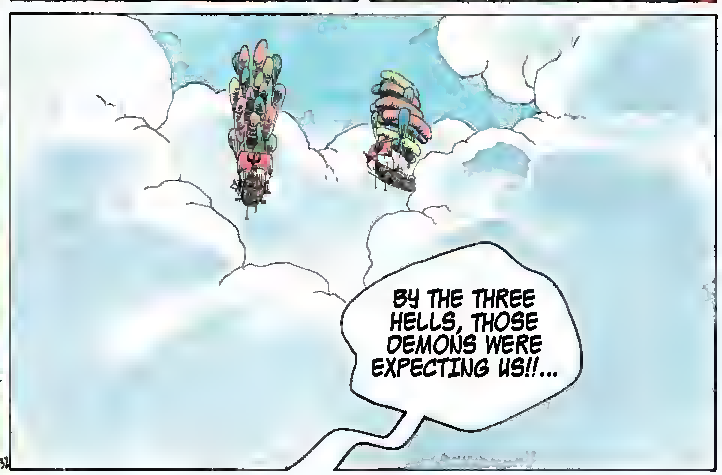

WE'LL DROP YOU OFF AS CLOSE AS POSSIBLE TO THE ENTRANCE TO THE FORBIDDEN TERRITORY.

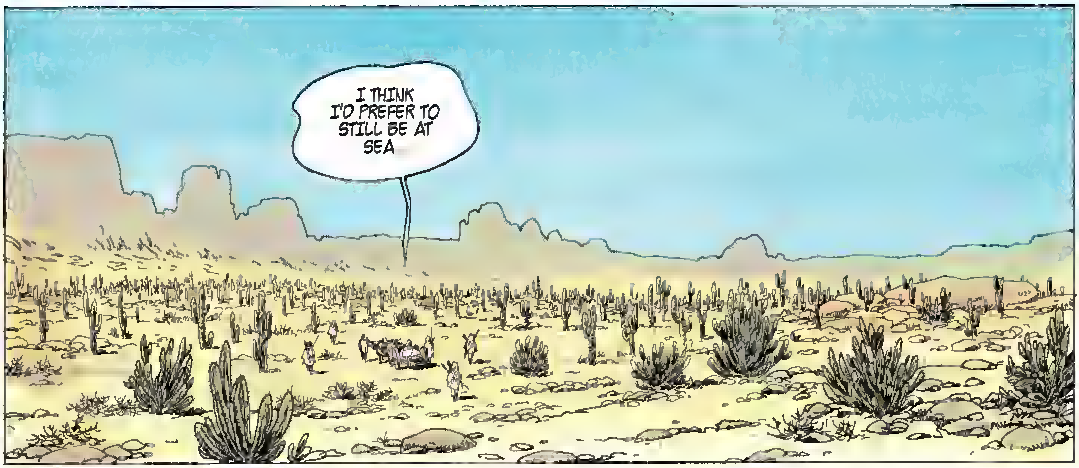

THE ENTRANCE IS MARKED BY A GIANT STATUE THAT OGOTAI HAD ERECTED, CALLED THE GODDESS WITH NO NAME. MISFORTUNE, SAYS THE LEGEND, TO HIM WHO VENTURES BEYOND HER GAZE

A GUIDE WILL BE WAITING TO TAKE YOU TO MAYAXATL. A SURVIVOR OF THE SHEERSHECS TRIBE WHO LIVED IN THIS FOREST AND WERE DECIMATED BY THE CHAAMS HE OFFERED HIMSELF TO US

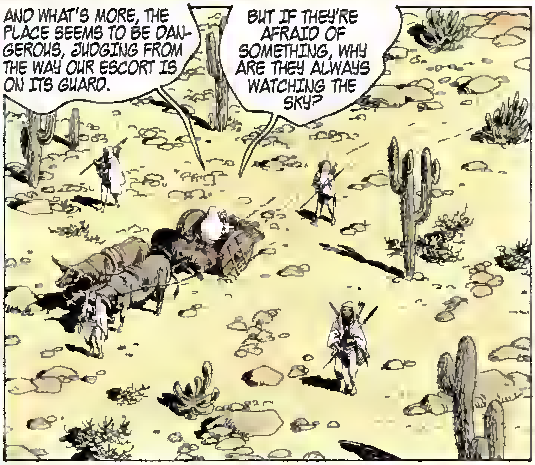
BUT WE HAVE OTHER ALLIES IN MAYAXATL ITSELF IF YOU WEAR THIS RING ON THE LITTLE FINGER OF YOUR RIGHT HAND, THEY'LL KNOW THAT YOU NEED THEM AND WILL MAKE THEMSELVES KNOWN
A PRETTY JEWEL

BUT HOW WILL WE GET IN CONTACT WITH YOUR HIGH REGENT IF WE EVER...?
ALERT! ENEMY VESSELS STRAIGHT AHEAD!

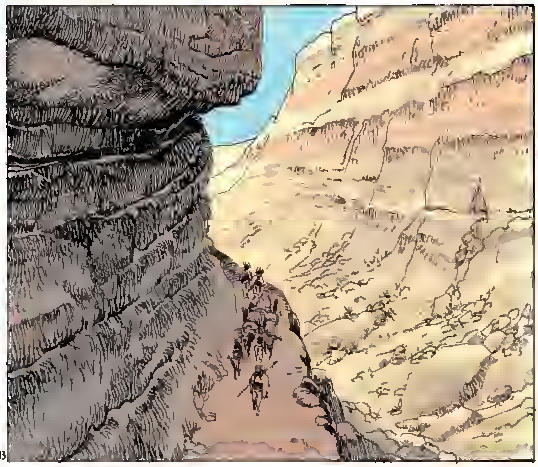

BY THE THREE HELLS, THOSE DEMONS WERE EXPECTING US!!...


I THINK I'D PREFER TO STILL BE AT SEA

ROCKS, SAND, FUNNY TREES WITH SPIKES LIKE DAGGERS... ALL THAT UNDER A SUN THAT BAKES YOUR BRAIN... HOW COULD THE GODS HAVE MADE SUCH A LAND!?


AND WHAT'S MORE, THE PLACE SEEMS TO BE DANGEROUS, JUDGING FROM THE WAY OUR ESCORT IS ON ITS GUARD.
BUT IF THEY'RE AFRAID OF SOMETHING, WHY ARE THEY ALWAYS WATCHING THE SKY?

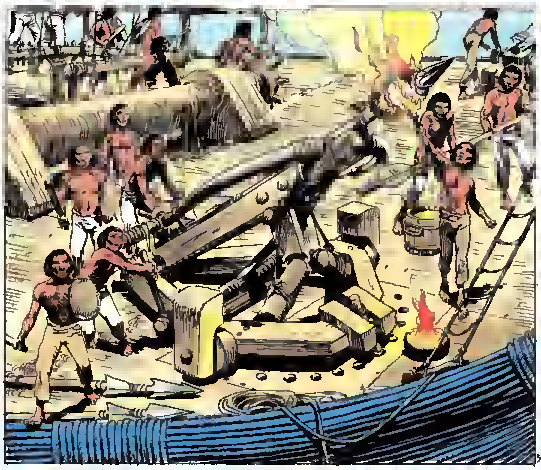
LOOKS LIKE WE'VE MADE IT SOMEWHERE.
DON'T CARE... IF IT'S NOT A COOL RIVER RUNNING THROUGH A HUGE PRAIRIE WITH GREEN TREES, I DON'T EVEN WANT TO LOOK.

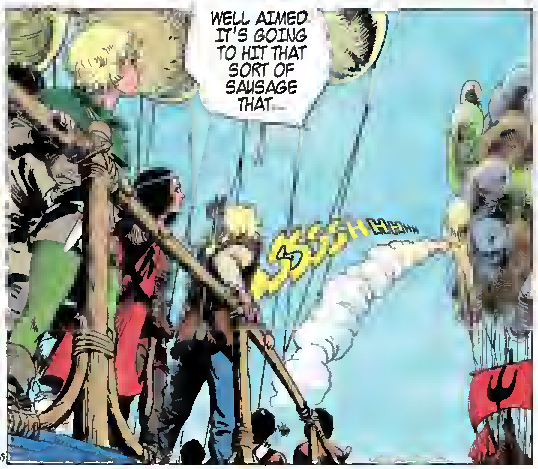


JOLAN! PINCH ME SO I KNOW IF I'M DREAMING...
IT'S... IT'S AMAZING!

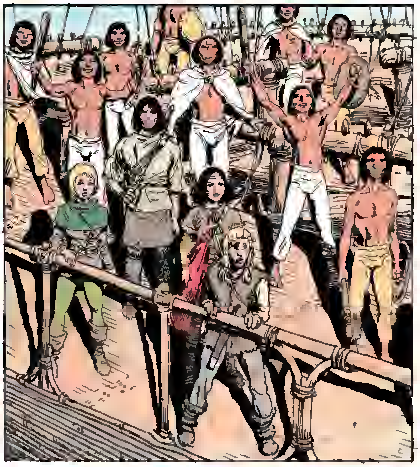
ISSHLAKK

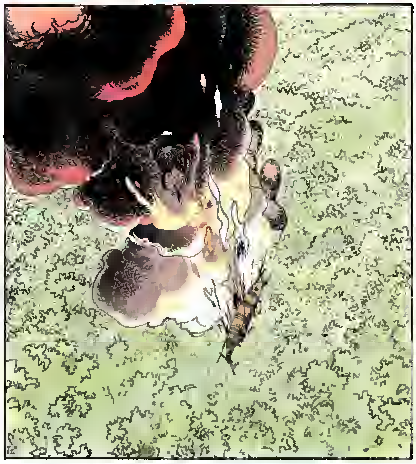
RESTRAIN YOUR KILLER INSTINCT. THEY ARE TOO FAR AWAY. ONLY THEIR BOW HARPOONS HAVE ENOUGH REACH AT THIS DISTANCE.
LOOK! WE'RE ABOUT TO SHOOT.

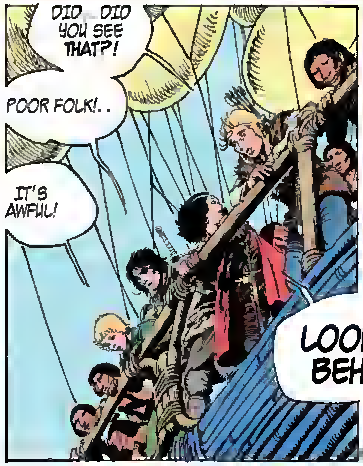


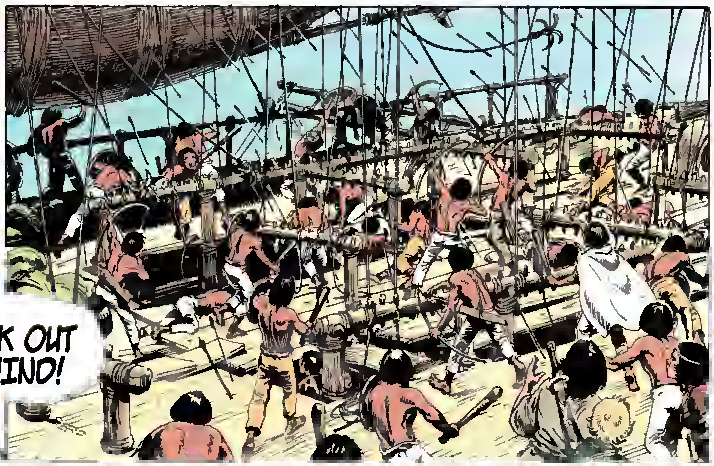

WELL AIMED. IT'S GOING TO HIT THAT SORT OF SAUSAGE THAT...
SSSH HH...

WHAMMS





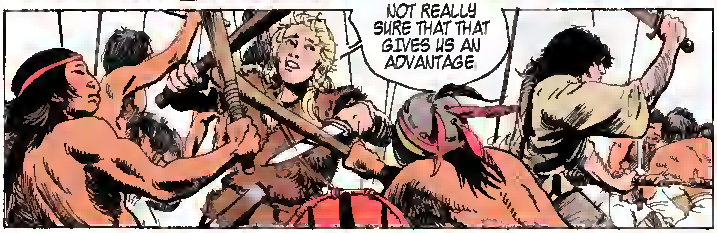

DID... DID YOU SEE THAT?!
POOR FOLK!..
IT'S AWFUL!


LOOK OUT BEHIND!

YAAAHHH
YAAAHHH
YYYAAAAHHHH
AAAAAHHH

AAH
!?
RAAAAAHHHHH
COME AND HELP ME INSTEAD OF PLAYING HIDE AND SEEK WE HAVE TO TRY TO CUT THE GRAPPLING ROPES

HAVE YOU NOTICED THAT NEITHER THE XINJIN NOR THE CHAAMS SEEM TO USE SWORDS?
I'VE NOTICED, YES...

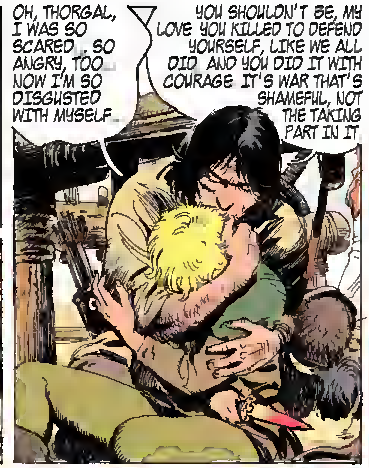

BUT I'M NOT REALLY SURE THAT THAT GIVES US AN ADVANTAGE...

THERE... THAT WAS THE LAST ONE!

??
??
??

THEY'RE BREAKING AWAY FROM THE FIGHT!.. WE'VE WON!
!?

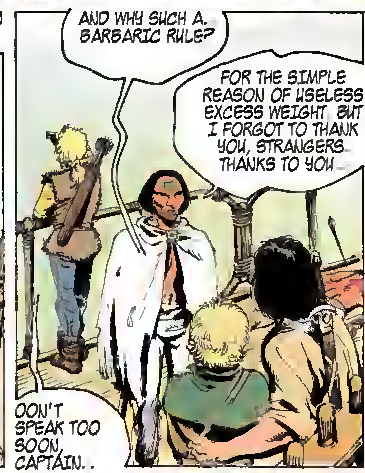
AARICIA, ARE ARE YOU HURT?
NO.

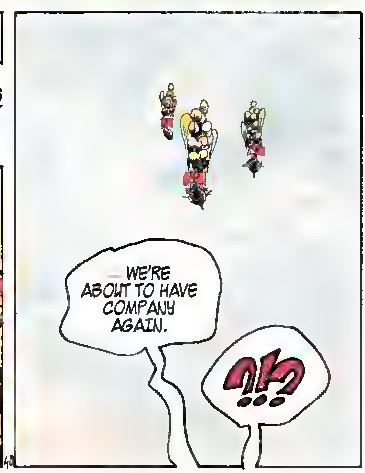

OH, THORGAL, I WAS SO SCARED.. SO ANGRY, TOO.. NOW I'M SO DISGUSTED WITH MYSELF..
YOU SHOULDN'T BE, MY LOVE YOU KILLED TO DEFEND YOURSELF, LIKE WE ALL DID AND YOU DID IT WITH COURAGE IT'S WAR THAT'S SHAMEFUL, NOT THE TAKING PART IN IT.

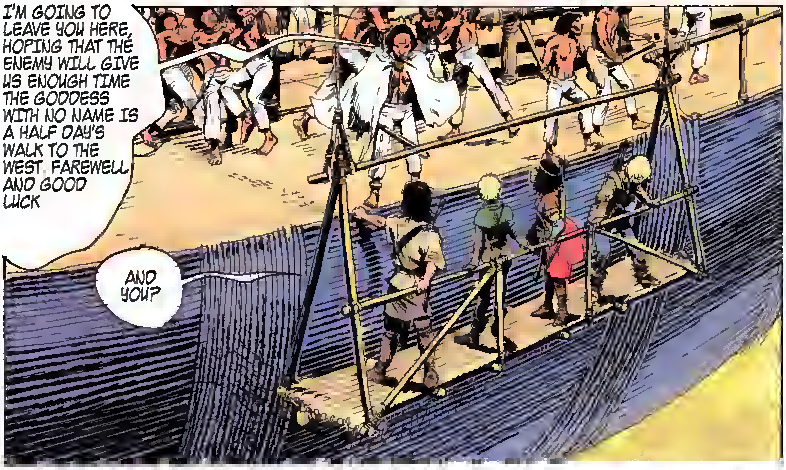
YOU'RE HURT—LET ME HELP YOU..
IT'S NOTHING LEAVE ME ALONE!
OH! THORGAL, IT'S AWFUL!..

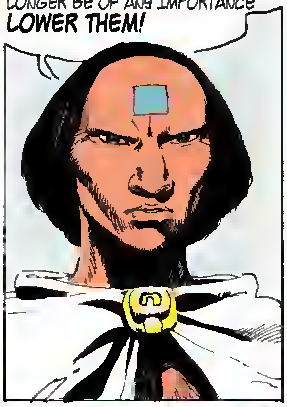
AAAHHH
AAAHH
AAAHH

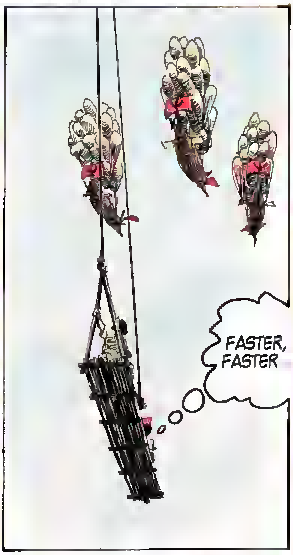
HOW DREADFUL! HOW CAN THEY BE SO CRUEL?...
BECAUSE THIS IS THE RULE OF COMBAT ABOARD AERIAL VESSELS


AND WHY SUCH A BARBARIC RULE?
FOR THE SIMPLE REASON OF USELESS EXCESS WEIGHT BUT I FORGOT TO THANK YOU, STRANGERS.. THANKS TO YOU..
DON'T SPEAK TOO SOON, CAPTAIN..

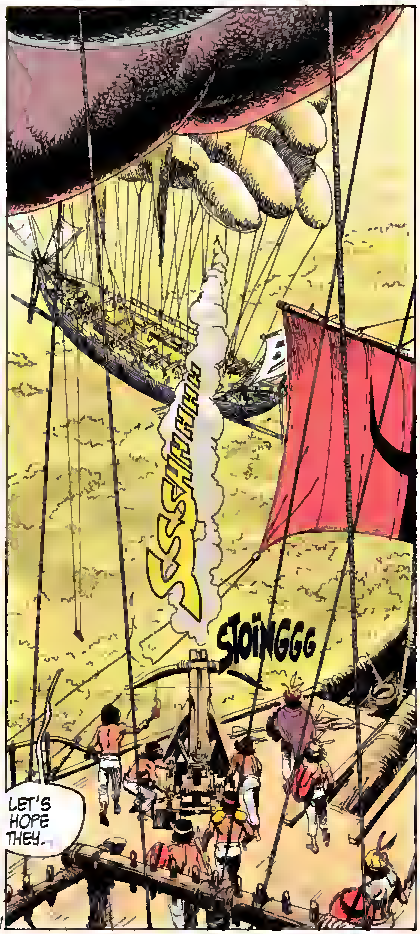

WE'RE ABOUT TO HAVE COMPANY AGAIN.
?!?

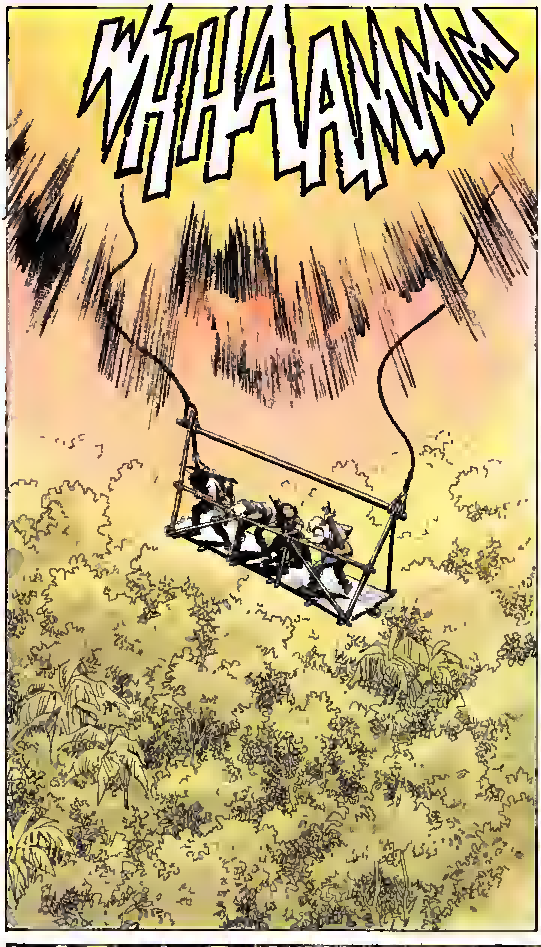

I'M GOING TO LEAVE YOU HERE, HOPING THAT THE ENEMY WILL GIVE US ENOUGH TIME THE GODDESS WITH NO NAME IS A HALF DAY'S WALK TO THE WEST. FAREWELL AND GOOD LUCK
AND YOU?

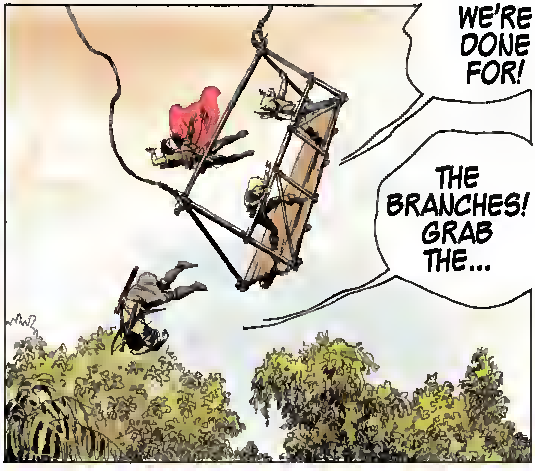

THAT'S AN ODD CONCERN, STRANGER AS SOON AS OUR MISSION IS COMPLETE, OUR FATE WILL NO LONGER BE OF ANY IMPORTANCE
LOWER THEM!


FASTER, FASTER

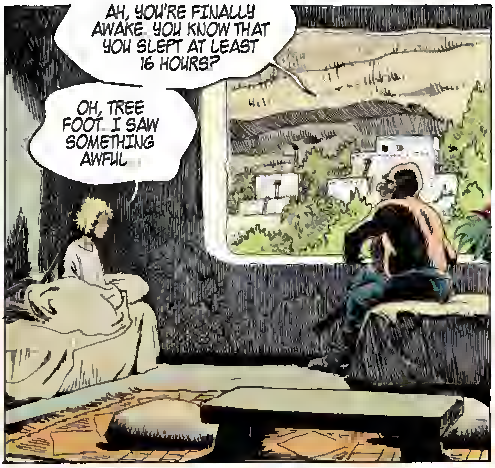
THAT SIGN, ON THE CHAAMS' SAILS. I'VE SEEN IT SOMEWHERE BEFORE... BUT WHERE?
THORGAL, THEY'RE ATTACKING!


SSSHHHHHHSSS
SIOÏNGGG
LET'S HOPE THEY...


WHHAANMM


WE'RE DONE FOR!
THE BRANCHES! GRAB THE...

AARICIA! THORGAL!

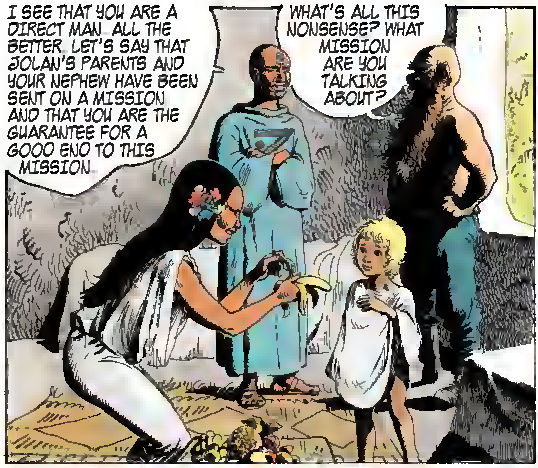

AH, YOU'RE FINALLY AWAKE. YOU KNOW THAT YOU SLEPT AT LEAST 16 HOURS?
OH, TREE FOOT. I SAW SOMETHING AWFUL

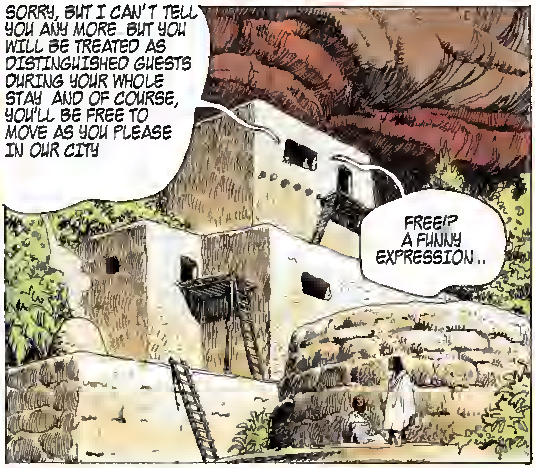
THORGAL, AARICIA, TJALL THEY WERE FALLING THROUGH SPACE... AND THEY HAD ANOTHER WOMAN WITH THEM, A WOMAN I DON'T KNOW
YOU HAD A BAD DREAM, MATEY

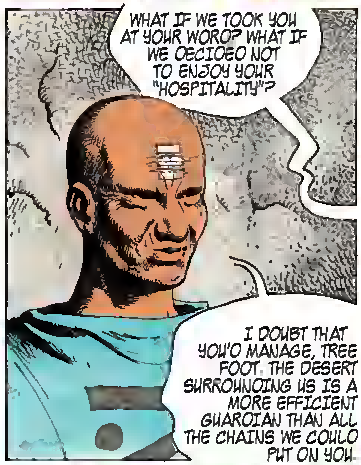
AFTER ALL OUR UPS AND DOWNS, I'M NOT SURPRISED. PERHAPS THE ADVENTURE THAT WE'RE LIVING THROUGH IS A DREAM TOO..
IT'S BEAUTIFUL!... DID YOU FIND OUT WHERE WE ARE?
IN THE CITY OF THE XINJIN, MY FRIENDS

WELCOME, ARGUN TREE FOOT, AND YOU, TOO, JOLAN, SON OF THORGAL AEGIRSSON. I HOPE THAT YOUR FIRST NIGHT WITH US WAS PLEASANT.
?
?

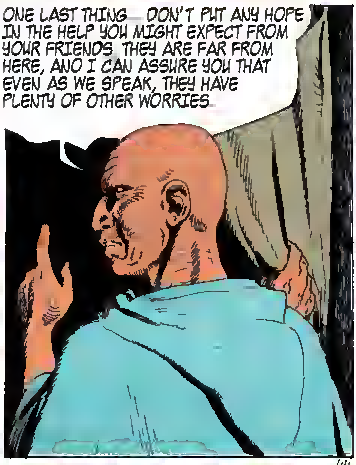
TAKE SOME FRUIT TO EAT. YOU DON'T KNOW MOST OF THEM, BUT I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT THEY ARE EXCELLENT.
TO HELL WITH YOUR WELCOME AND YOUR DAMNED FRUIT! WHAT DO YOU WANT FROM US? WHY DID YOU HAVE US KIDNAPPED TO BRING US HERE?

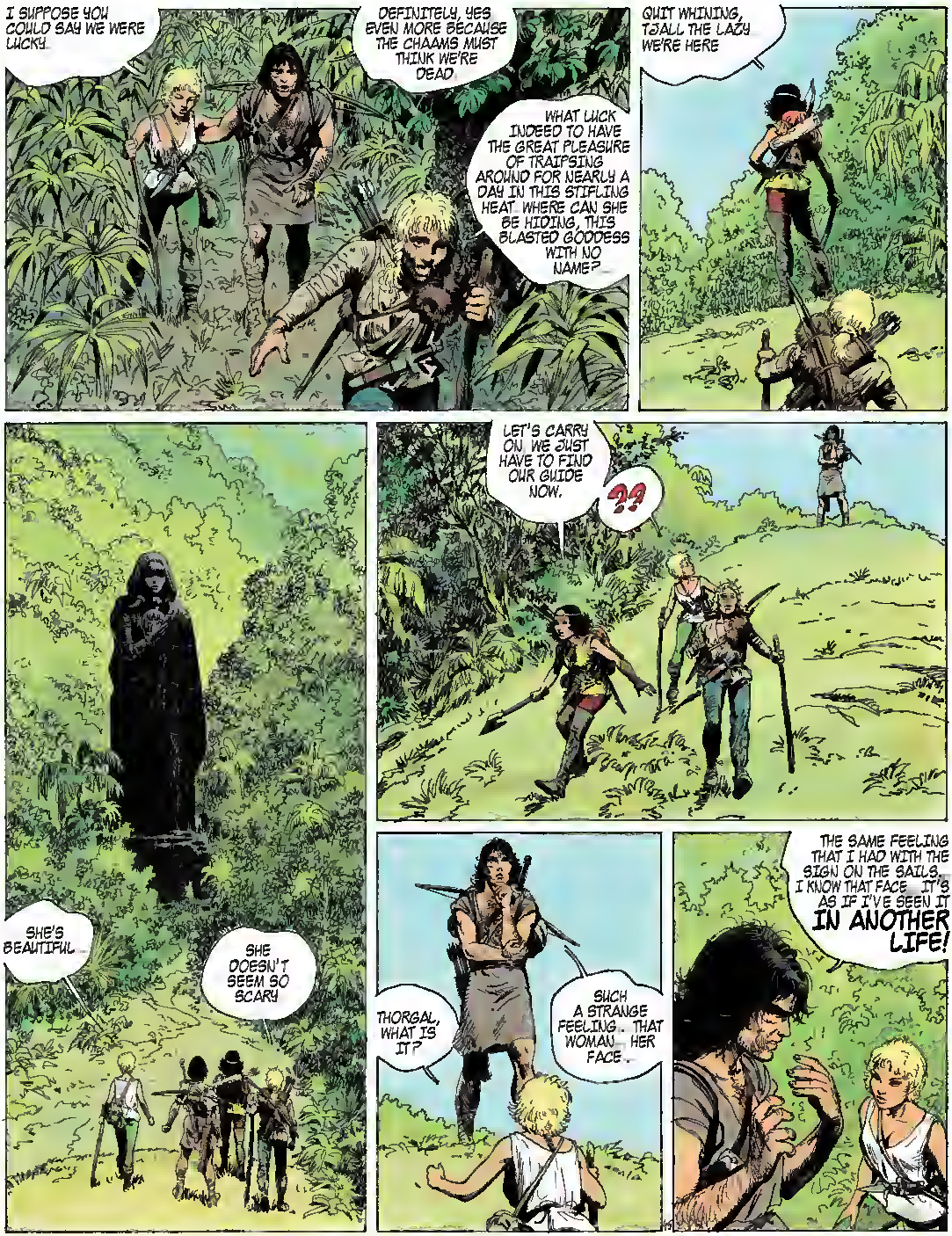

I SEE THAT YOU ARE A DIRECT MAN. ALL THE BETTER. LET'S SAY THAT JOLAN'S PARENTS AND YOUR NEPHEW HAVE BEEN SENT ON A MISSION AND THAT YOU ARE THE GUARANTEE FOR A GOOD END TO THIS MISSION.
WHAT'S ALL THIS NONSENSE? WHAT MISSION ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?


SORRY, BUT I CAN'T TELL YOU ANY MORE. BUT YOU WILL BE TREATED AS DISTINGUISHED GUESTS DURING YOUR WHOLE STAY. AND OF COURSE, YOU'LL BE FREE TO MOVE AS YOU PLEASE IN OUR CITY.
FREE? A FUNNY EXPRESSION..


WHAT IF WE TOOK YOU AT YOUR WORD? WHAT IF WE DECIDED NOT TO ENJOY YOUR "HOSPITALITY"?
I DOUBT THAT YOU'D MANAGE. TREE FOOT. THE DESERT SURROUNDING US IS A MORE EFFICIENT GUARDIAN THAN ALL THE CHAINS WE COULD PUT ON YOU.

ESPECIALLY FOR AN INFIRM WITH A CHILD.
YOU LIKE THE FRUIT, JOLAN? WE CALL THAT A BANANA.


ONE LAST THING... DON'T PUT ANY HOPE IN THE HELP YOU MIGHT EXPECT FROM YOUR FRIENDS. THEY ARE FAR FROM HERE, AND I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT EVEN AS WE SPEAK, THEY HAVE PLENTY OF OTHER WORRIES.


I SUPPOSE YOU COULD SAY WE WERE LUCKY...
DEFINITELY, YES EVEN MORE BECAUSE THE CHAAMS MUST THINK WE'RE DEAD...
WHAT LUCK INDEED TO HAVE THE GREAT PLEASURE OF TRAIPSING AROUND FOR NEARLY A DAY IN THIS STIFLING HEAT. WHERE CAN SHE BE HIDING, THIS BLASTED GODDESS WITH NO NAME?...
QUIT WHINING, TOALL THE LAZY WE'RE HERE
LET'S CARRY ON. WE JUST HAVE TO FIND OUR GUIDE NOW.
??
SHE'S BEAUTIFUL...
SHE DOESN'T SEEM SO SCARY
THORGAL, WHAT IS IT?
SUCH A STRANGE FEELING... THAT WOMAN... HER FACE...
THE SAME FEELING THAT I HAD WITH THE SIGN ON THE SAILS... I KNOW THAT FACE... IT'S AS IF I'VE SEEN IT IN ANOTHER LIFE!

SO, THE GUIDE?
OH, HE'S HERE...
BUT SOMEONE FOUND HIM BEFORE WE DID AND I DON'T LIKE THAT AT ALL
WELL, NOW WE'RE FORCED TO FIGURE OUT HOW TO GET TO MAYAXATL ON OUR OWN.

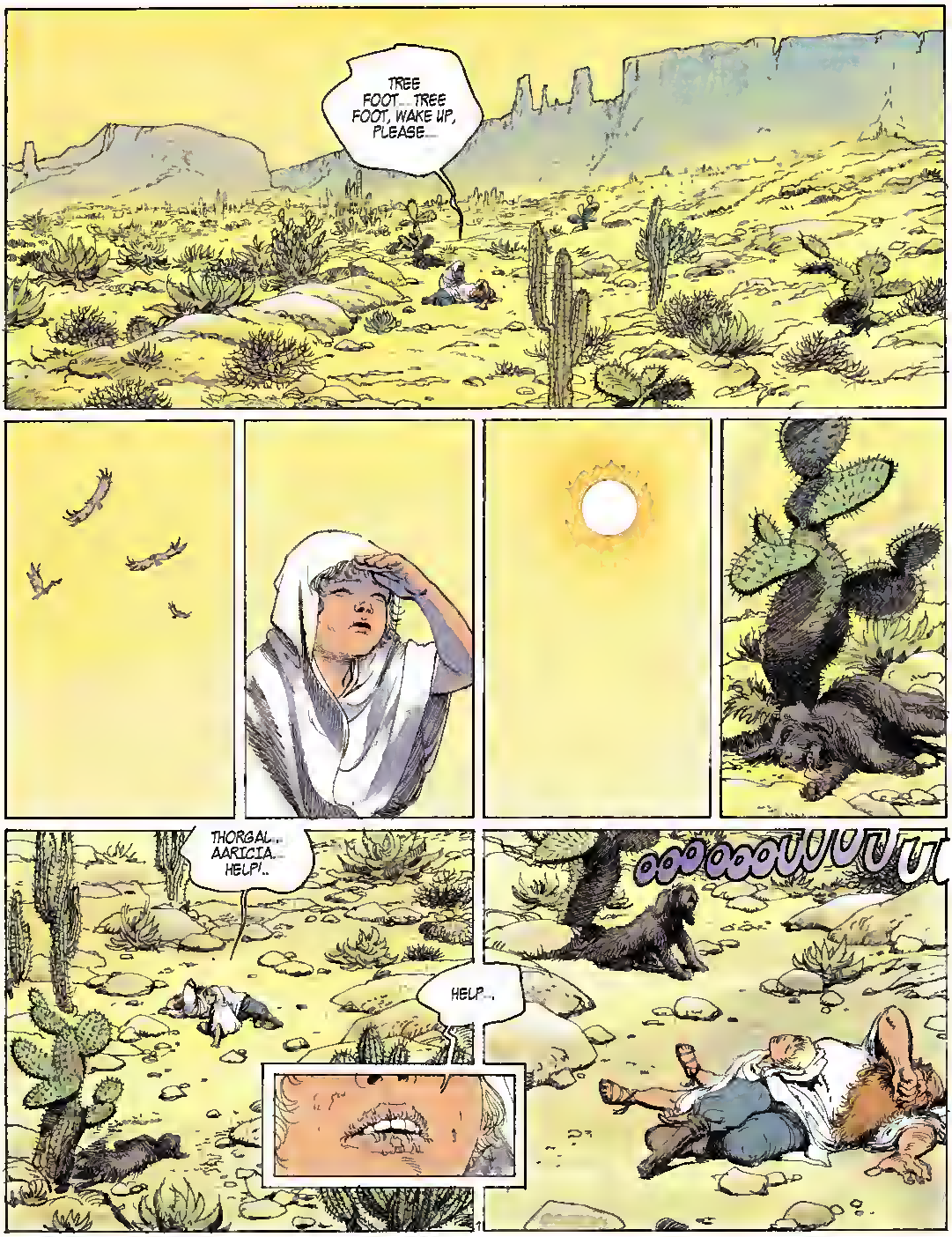
THORGAL
The Eyes of Tanatloc
ROSINSKI - VAN HAMME

ROSINSKI-VAN HAMME

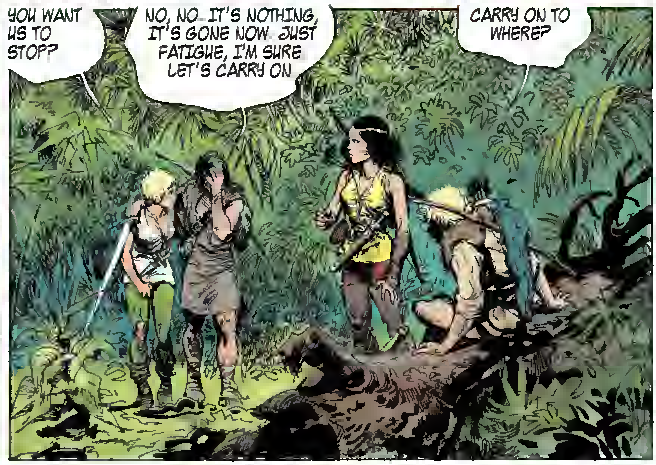
THORGAL

The Eyes of Tanatloc

9th CINEBOOK
The 9th Art Publisher


TREE FOOT... TREE FOOT, WAKE UP, PLEASE...
THORGAL... AARICIA... HELP!..
HELP...
OOO OOOUUUUU

WHAT IS IT? SOMETHING WRONG?
AN AWFUL FEELING... LIKE A SCREAM INSIDE MY HEAD

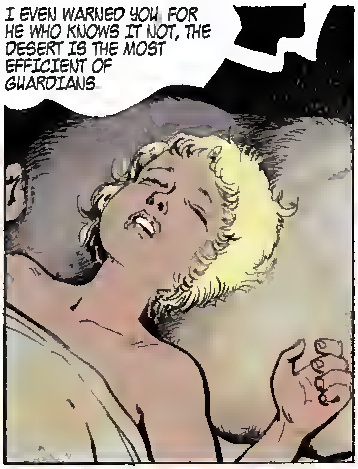

YOU WANT US TO STOP?
NO, NO... IT'S NOTHING, IT'S GONE NOW. JUST FATIGUE, I'M SURE. LET'S CARRY ON.
CARRY ON TO WHERE?

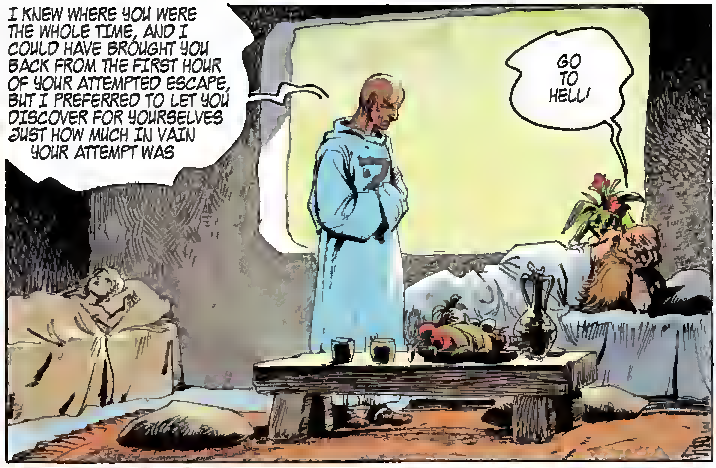
WE DON'T EVEN KNOW IF WE'RE GOING IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION. WE'RE GOING TO TRAIPSE AROUND THIS ROTTEN FOREST LOOKING FOR THAT CURSED GHOST TOWN UNTIL WE DIE!

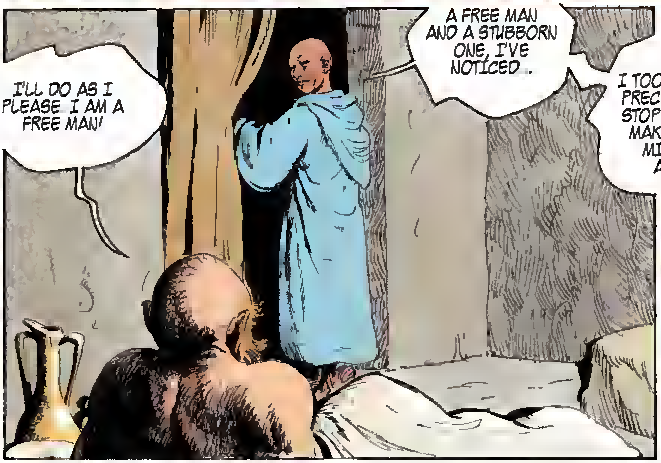
IF WE'RE GOING TO DIE, HERE WOULD BE AS GOOD AS ANYWHERE ELSE. I'VE HAD MORE THAN ENOUGH OF THIS LITTLE GAME. I'VE HAD IT UP TO HERE ENOUGH! I'M NOT GOING ANY FURTHER!
THAT WOULD SURPRISE ME, TOTALLY THE WHINY, SEEING AS YOU'VE PICKED A BAD PLACE TO SIT.

WHAT DO YOU...
AAAAAAHH

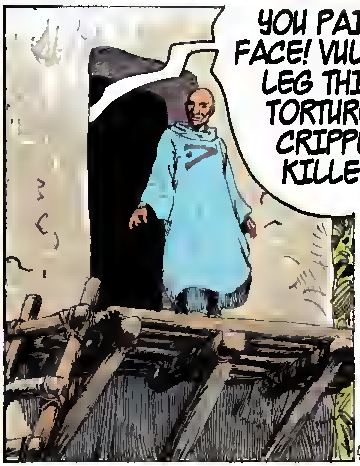
HOW AWFUL— RED ANTS!
AS BIG AS THUMBS!
DIRTY LITTLE CREATURES!
HA HA HA HA!
AND THIS MAKES HER LAUGH, THAT CRAZY WOMAN WHO DRAGGED US INTO THIS HELLHOLE! YES, CRAZY! YOU ARE INSANE, KRISS OF VALNOR! COMPLETELY DEMENTED!
YOU'RE COMPLETELY RIGHT, TJALL THE ANGRY...
WHOEVER KILLED THE MAN WHO WAS WAITING FOR US MUST'VE THOUGHT THAT WE WOULDN'T BE MAD ENOUGH ALREADY TO RISK CROSSING THE FORBIDDEN TERRITORIES WITHOUT A GUIDE. SO THAT'S OUR BEST CHANCE OF REACHING MAYAXATL WITHOUT BEING DISTURBED BY OGOTAI'S CHAAMS...
AND THIS TOWN, WE'LL FIND IT IN THE END EVEN IF WE HAVE TO WALK THROUGH THIS FOREST FOR SIX MONTHS. MOVE OUT!
WHAT WERE YOU EXPECTING, ARGUN TREE FOOT?


I EVEN WARNED YOU. FOR HE WHO KNOWS IT NOT, THE DESERT IS THE MOST EFFICIENT OF GUARDIANS

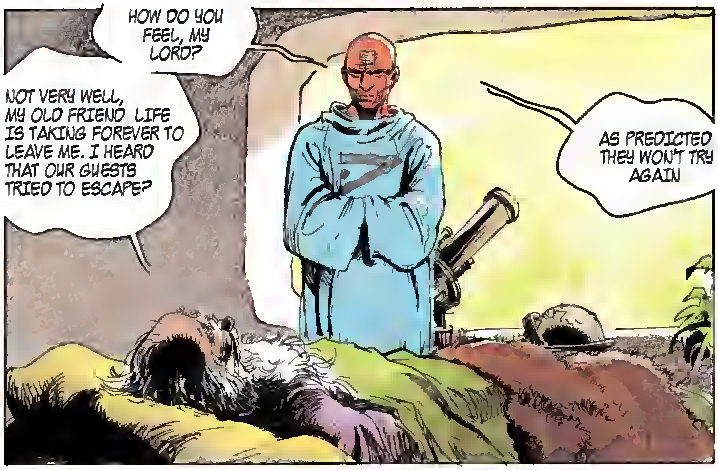

I KNEW WHERE YOU WERE THE WHOLE TIME, AND I COULD HAVE BROUGHT YOU BACK FROM THE FIRST HOUR OF YOUR ATTEMPTED ESCAPE, BUT I PREFERRED TO LET YOU DISCOVER FOR YOURSELVES JUST HOW MUCH IN VAIN YOUR ATTEMPT WAS
GO TO HELL!

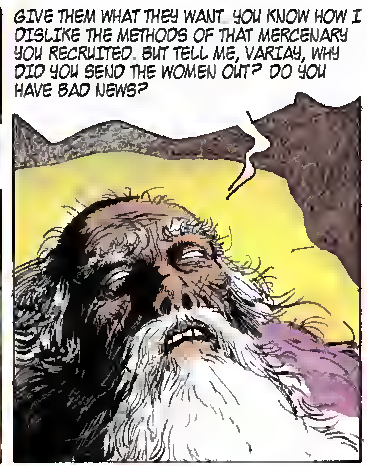

I'LL DO AS I PLEASE. I AM A FREE MAN!
A FREE MAN AND A STUBBORN ONE, I'VE NOTICED.

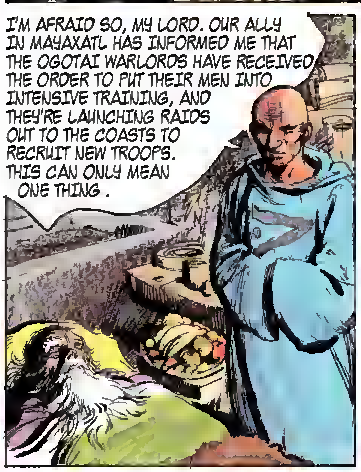
SO I TOOK A SMALL PRECAUTION TO STOP YOU FROM MAKING YOUR MISTAKES AGAIN.
?!?

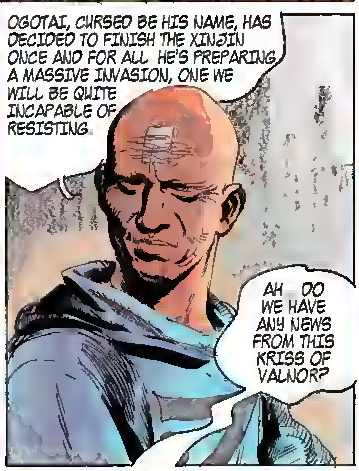

YOU PAINT-FACE! VULTURE! LEG THIEF! TORTURER! CRIPPLE KILLER!

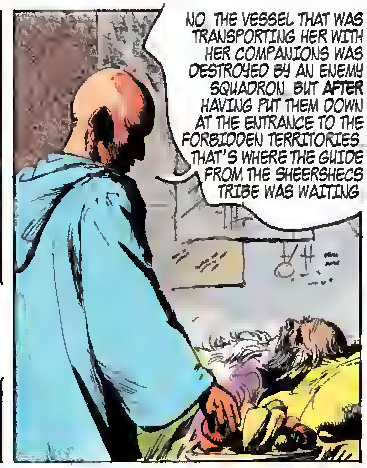
LEAVE US!

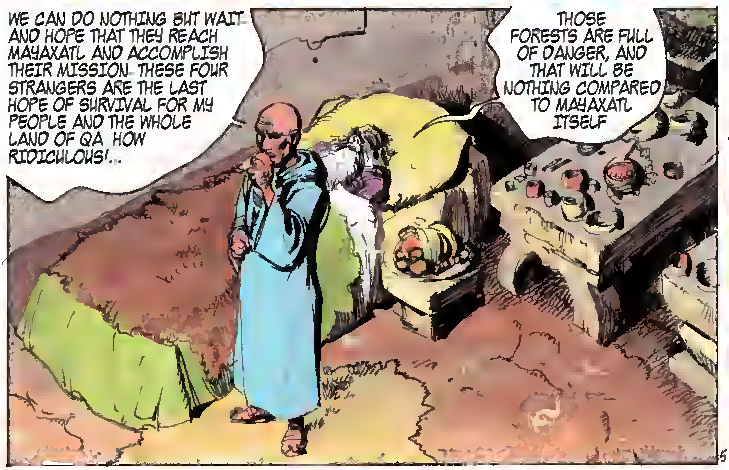

HOW DO YOU FEEL, MY LORD?
NOT VERY WELL, MY OLD FRIEND. LIFE IS TAKING FOREVER TO LEAVE ME. I HEARD THAT OUR GUESTS TRIED TO ESCAPE?
AS PREDICTED THEY WON'T TRY AGAIN

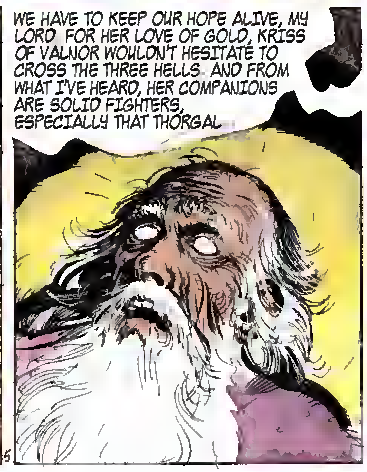

GIVE THEM WHAT THEY WANT. YOU KNOW HOW I DISLIKE THE METHODS OF THAT MERCENARY YOU RECRUITED. BUT TELL ME, VARIAN, WHY DID YOU SEND THE WOMEN OUT? DO YOU HAVE BAD NEWS?

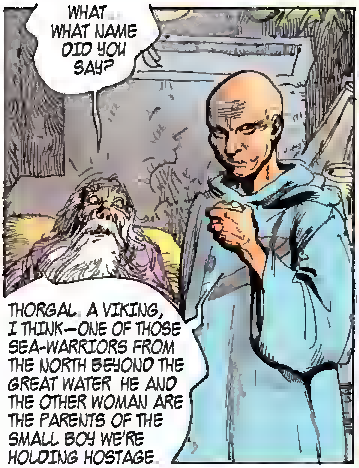

I'M AFRAID SO, MY LORD. OUR ALLY IN MAYAXATL HAS INFORMED ME THAT THE OGOTAI WARLORDS HAVE RECEIVED THE ORDER TO PUT THEIR MEN INTO INTENSIVE TRAINING, AND THEY'RE LAUNCHING RAIDS OUT TO THE COASTS TO RECRUIT NEW TROOPS. THIS CAN ONLY MEAN ONE THING.


OGOTAI, CURSED BE HIS NAME, HAS DECIDED TO FINISH THE XINJIN ONCE AND FOR ALL. HE'S PREPARING A MASSIVE INVASION, ONE WE WILL BE QUITE INCAPABLE OF RESISTING.
AH... DO WE HAVE ANY NEWS FROM THIS KRISS OF VALNOR?

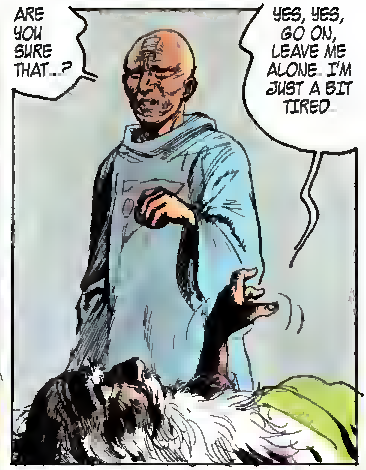

NO. THE VESSEL THAT WAS TRANSPORTING HER WITH HER COMPANIONS WAS DESTROYED BY AN ENEMY SQUADRON. BUT AFTER HAVING PUT THEM DOWN AT THE ENTRANCE TO THE FORBIDDEN TERRITORIES. THAT'S WHERE THE GUIDE FROM THE SHEERSHECS TRIBE WAS WAITING.


WE CAN DO NOTHING BUT WAIT AND HOPE THAT THEY REACH MAYAXATL AND ACCOMPLISH THEIR MISSION. THESE FOUR STRANGERS ARE THE LAST HOPE OF SURVIVAL FOR MY PEOPLE AND THE WHOLE LAND OF QA. HOW RIDICULOUS!...
THOSE FORESTS ARE FULL OF DANGER, AND THAT WILL BE NOTHING COMPARED TO MAYAXATL ITSELF


WE HAVE TO KEEP OUR HOPE ALIVE, MY LORD. FOR HER LOVE OF GOLD, KRISS OF VALNOR WOULDN'T HESITATE TO CROSS THE THREE HELLS. AND FROM WHAT I'VE HEARD, HER COMPANIONS ARE SOLID FIGHTERS, ESPECIALLY THAT THORGAL.

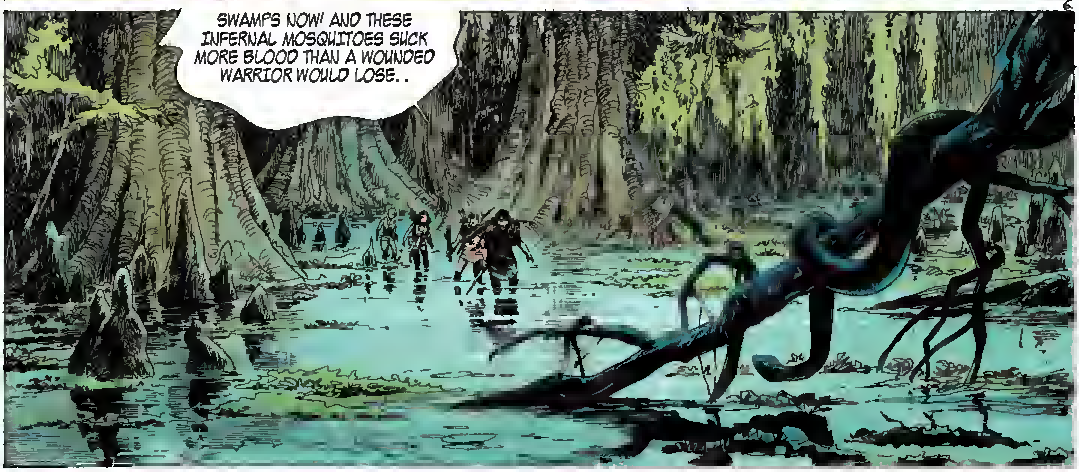

WHAT WHAT NAME DID YOU SAY?
THORGAL. A VIKING, I THINK—ONE OF THOSE SEA-WARRIORS FROM THE NORTH BEYOND THE GREAT WATER. HE AND THE OTHER WOMAN ARE THE PARENTS OF THE SMALL BOY WE'RE HOLDING HOSTAGE.

BUT WHAT IS IT, MY LORD? DO YOU WANT ME TO CALL THEM?
NO, VARIAY, NO, IT'S NOTHING. LEAVE ME NOW


ARE YOU SURE THAT...?
YES, YES, GO ON, LEAVE ME ALONE. I'M JUST A BIT TIRED...

THORGAL... A VIKING... COULD IT REALLY BE HE? OUT OF MILLIONS OF MEN!? THAT WOULD BE... SO DREADFUL!...

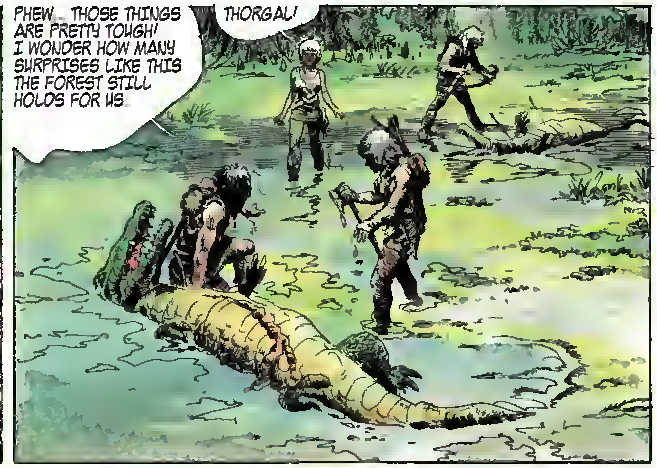
AND HIS SON... THE SON OF THORGAL, HERE, JUST A FEW METRES AWAY FROM ME... WHAT IF THAT CHILD HAD...? OH, I MUST KNOW... I MUST BE SURE!


SWAMPS NOW! AND THESE INFERNAL MOSQUITOES SUCK MORE BLOOD THAN A WOUNDED WARRIOR WOULD LOSE..

MOSQUITOES, GIANT ANTS, SNAKES, LEECHES AND THOUSANDS OF OTHER AWFUL CREATURES THAT DON'T EVEN HAVE NAMES. THIS IS REALLY HEAVEN HERE! THANKS, KRISS OF VALNOR.
WOULD YOU MIND SAVING YOUR BREATH?
WHAT FOR? TO SING A HAPPY SONG TONIGHT AROUND THE FIRE, AFTER THE DELICIOUS MEAL THAT'S WAITING FOR US? THE SOONER I LOSE MY BREATH, THE BETTER IT WILL BE
IF ONLY THAT WOULD STOP YOU FROM JABBERING LIKE AN OLD GAP-TOOTHED GRANDMOTHER.
BY THE ROTTEN ENTRAILS OF ALL THE DEMONS!!
WHAT ARE YOU STANDING THERE LOOKING AT ME FOR? YOU COULD HELP ME, COULDN'T YOU?
I DON'T MIND SAVING YOUR LIFE, LIKE I DID ON THE FLYING SHIP, BECAUSE I HAD TO. BUT GIVING YOU A HAND? NO WAY!
SORT YOURSELF OUT, PROUD WARRIOR. AND AFTER THAT, DON'T FORGET TO ADMIRE YOURSELF IN YOUR PRETTY LITTLE MIRROR. YOU'LL HAVE A SURPRISE...
THAT, PRINCESS, IS THE CHANCE I WAS WAITING FOR...

HAHAHA! NOW YOU'RE AS PRETTY AS ME, HONEY. DON'T WORRY, I'LL LEND YOU MY MIRROR SO YOU CAN ADMIRE YOURSELF, TOO!
WHAT THE ?
STOP!
DON'T YOU THINK WE HAVE ENOUGH PROBLEMS AS IT IS?
THORGAL, LOOK OUT!

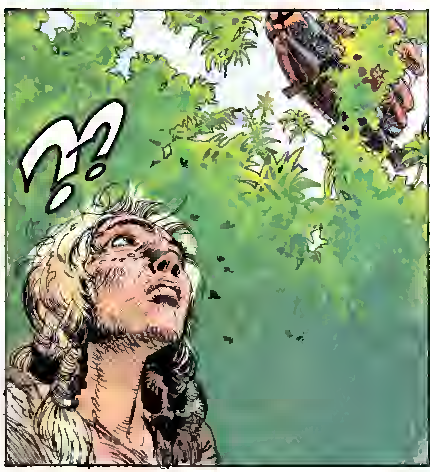
WHAT? WHAT IS IT?
THINGS, THERE... TWO ANIMALS BEHIND YOU!...
?!?!
AAAAAH
NO, NO! THORGAL, OVER HERE!
QUICK, HELP ME! I CAN'T HOLD IT ANY LONGER!...


PHEW... THOSE THINGS ARE PRETTY TOUGH! I WONDER HOW MANY SURPRISES LIKE THIS THE FOREST STILL HOLDS FOR US...
THORGAL!

OH, MY LOVE, WHAT A NIGHT-MARE! ARE YOU HURT? YOU'RE NOT INJURED?
I DON'T THINK SO NO, I'M OKAY BUT MY BOW IS BROKEN AND I'VE LOST MY SWORD.
BRAVO- A TOUCHING SCENE BUT WE'D DO BETTER TO GET OUT OF HERE BEFORE THEIR LITTLE BROTHERS TURN UP.

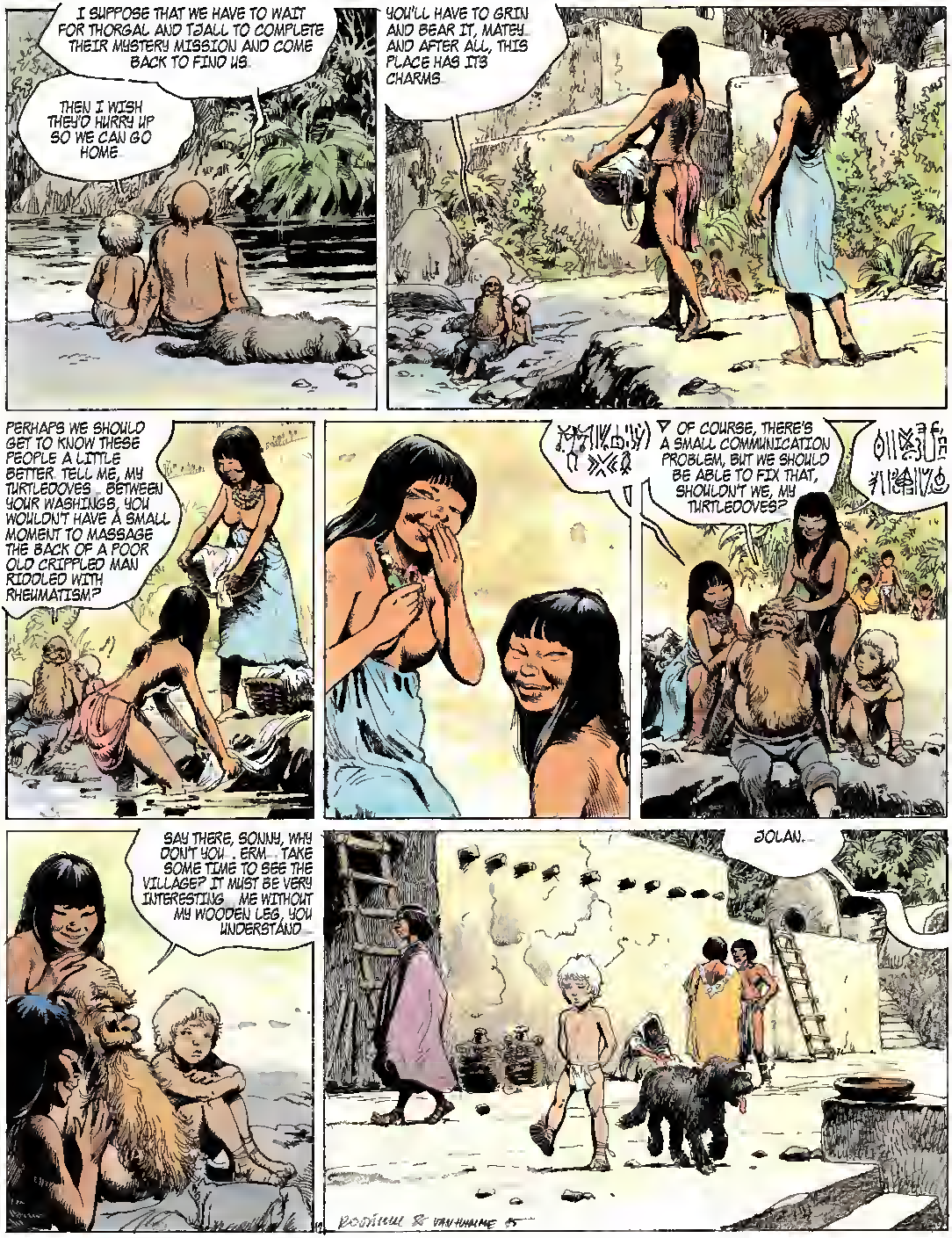
TJALL, WHAT ARE YOU DOING? COME HERE!
I'M COMING I'LL JUST GET MY ARROWS.

WHAT DISGUSTING CREATURES. HOW COULD THE GODS HAVE CREATED SUCH HORRORS? I BET THEY AREN'T EVEN GOOD TO EAT...


?!

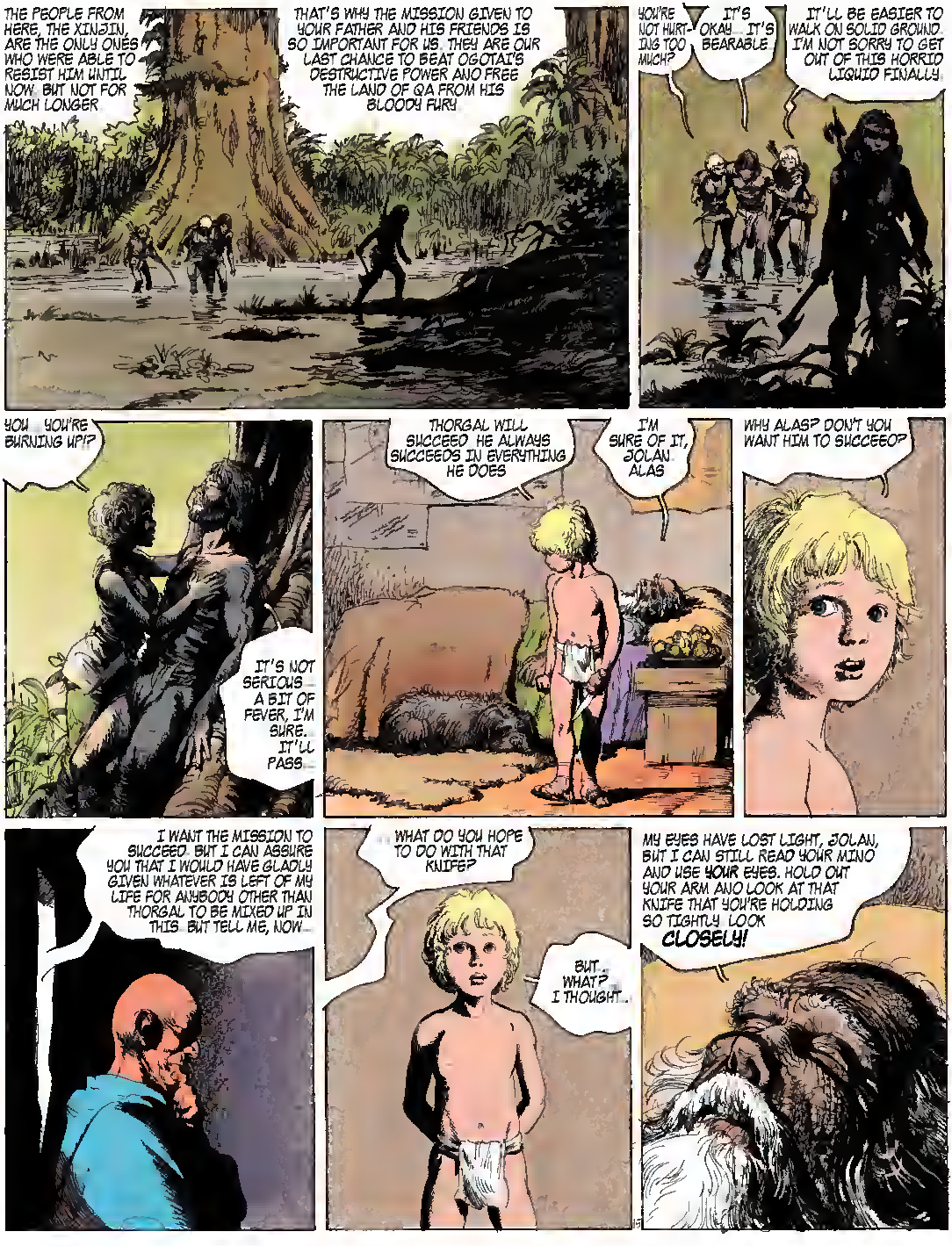
TAKE COVER, QUICK!

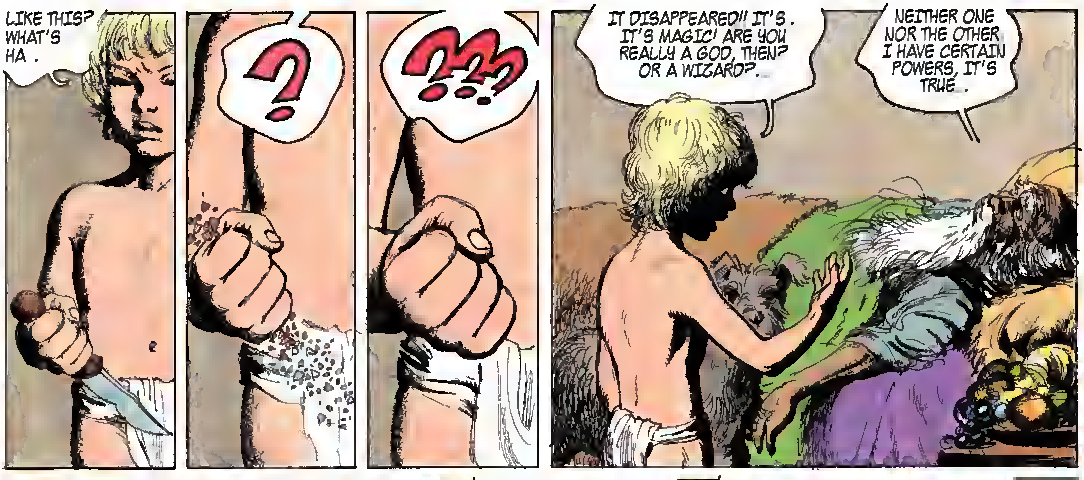
THEY'VE GONE. THEY DIDN'T SEE US. YOU THINK THEY WERE LOOKING FOR US?
PERHAPS IT'S JUST A ROUTINE PATROL. IN ANY CASE, THAT PROVES THAT WE ARE HEADED IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION.
THORGAL, WHAT IS IT? ARE YOU IN PAIN?
IT'S WHERE I WAS HIT WITH THE TAIL... I MUST HAVE BROKEN SOME RIBS... I'M JUST GLAD THAT MY BOW SOFTENED THE BLOW.
MY POOR DARLING. WE CAN CAMP HERE, IN THESE ROOTS, WHILE YOU GET BETTER...
NO WAY!
WE HAVE TO GET OUT OF THE SWAMP. BROKEN RIBS OR NOT, YOUR POOR DARLING WILL BE TOUGH ENOUGH TO WALK A LITTLE FURTHER...
THIS TIME, KRISS OF VALNOR, I'LL RIP YOUR SERPENT TONGUE OUT!...
THAT'S ENOUGH, YOU TWO!
IF YOU CARRY ON LIKE THAT, WE'LL HAVE NO CHANCE OF GETTING OUT. YOU HEAR ME, AARICIA? NO CHANCE!
BECAUSE WE HAD ONE IN THE FIRST PLACE, YOU THINK? ?ALL WAS RIGHT. THIS FOREST WILL BE OUR GRAVE, AND ALL BECAUSE OF THAT...
SILENCE! THERE'S ALWAYS A CHANCE, AARICIA, ALWAYS! WE'LL START BY LOOKING FOR A DRY PLACE TO SET UP CAMP, AND THERE WE WILL WAIT. I THINK I HAVE A WAY TO FIND THE PATH TO MAYAXATL FOR CERTAIN. A RISKY BUT SIMPLE METHOD...
YOU THINK WE'LL BE HERE FOR LONG, TREE FOOT?
I HAVE NO IDEA, SONNY.

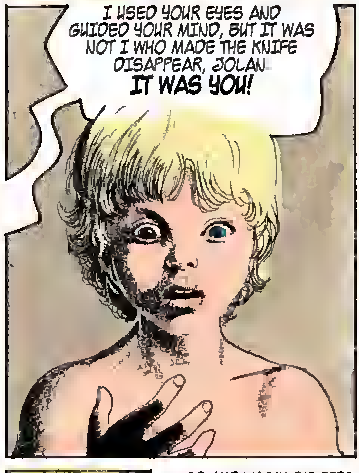

I SUPPOSE THAT WE HAVE TO WAIT FOR THORGAL AND TJALL TO COMPLETE THEIR MYSTERY MISSION AND COME BACK TO FIND US.
THEN I WISH THEY'D HURRY UP SO WE CAN GO HOME.
YOU'LL HAVE TO GRIN AND BEAR IT, MATEY... AND AFTER ALL, THIS PLACE HAS ITS CHARMS.
PERHAPS WE SHOULD GET TO KNOW THESE PEOPLE A LITTLE BETTER. TELL ME, MY TURTLEDOVES... BETWEEN YOUR WASHINGS, YOU WOULDN'T HAVE A SMALL MOMENT TO MASSAGE THE BACK OF A POOR OLD CRIPPLED MAN RIDDLED WITH RHEUMATISM?
OF COURSE, THERE'S A SMALL COMMUNICATION PROBLEM, BUT WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO FIX THAT, SHOULDN'T WE, MY TURTLEDOVES?
SAY THERE, SONNY, WHY DON'T YOU... ERM... TAKE SOME TIME TO SEE THE VILLAGE? IT MUST BE VERY INTERESTING... ME WITHOUT MY WOODEN LEG, YOU UNDERSTAND...
JOLAN...

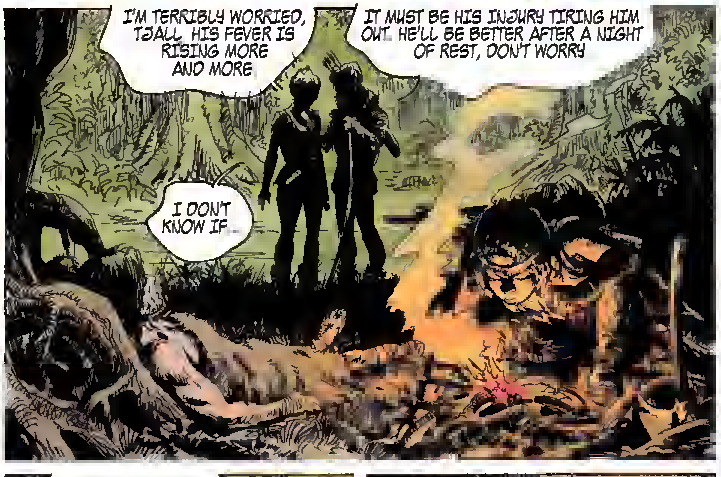
COME WITH ME. THE LORD GOD TANATLOC WANTS TO SPEAK TO YOU.
WHO'S THAT? TANATLOC? AND ANYWAY, I DON'T WANT TO GO... NOT WITHOUT TREE FOOT.
DON'T WORRY ABOUT YOUR COMPANION. OUR YOUNG LADIES WILL TAKE CARE OF HIM FOR AS LONG AS IT TAKES.
AS LONG AS WHAT TAKES? I TOLD YOU I DON'T WANT TO GO.
ANYWAY, WHY DO YOU SAY THAT HE'S A GOD? REAL GODS CAN'T BE SEEN.
MIND WHAT YOU SAY, JOLAN. TANATLOC IS VERY OLD, BUT HE STILL HAS GREAT POWERS.
HERE'S THE CHILD, MY LORD.
THANK YOU, VARIAY. LEAVE US, NOW.
THAT IS NOT PRUDENT, MY LORD. THIS KID IS A REBEL. HE COULD...
HE WON'T DO ANYTHING TO ME, VARIAY. AND WHAT I HAVE TO TELL HIM MUST NOT BE HEARD, EVEN BY YOU.
VERY WELL.
COME CLOSER, JOLAN. YOUR NAME IS JOLAN, ISN'T IT?...

DO NOT BE AFRAID, MY CHILD. MY EYES CAN NO LONGER SEE YOU, AND I JUST WANTED TO TOUCH YOUR FACE WITH MY HAND
I'M NOT AFRAID.
THE HIGH REGENT SAID THAT YOU WERE A GOD. BUT THAT'S NOT TRUE
YOU'RE JUST AN EVIL OLD MAN WHO'S ABOUT TO DIE
YOUR WORDS ARE CRUEL, BUT YOU ARE RIGHT, JOLAN. I AM JUST A VERY OLD DYING MAN, AND I AM SURELY EVIL. DO YOU KNOW WHY YOU AND ARGUN ARE HERE?
YES
YOU'RE KEEPING US PRISONER TO FORCE MY FATHER AND TJALL, TREE FOOT'S NEPHEW, TO DO SOMETHING FOR YOU.
THAT'S WHY YOU'RE EVIL.
WE HAVE GIVEN THORGAL AND HIS COMPANIONS THE TASK OF RETRIEVING THE MAGIC HEAD-PIECE FROM A MAN KNOWN AS OGOTAI. HE REIGNS OVER A CITY CALLED MAYAXATL THAT HE HAD BUILT AT THE HEART OF THE GREAT WILD FOREST. IT'S FAR TO THE SOUTH OF HERE.
THANKS TO THE POWERS THAT HIS HEADPIECE GIVES HIM, HE, TOO, IS TAKEN FOR A GOD BY HIS PEOPLE
BUT HE IS A CRUEL GOD, JOLAN. A RUTHLESS TYRANT WHO ONLY SEEKS TO DOMINATE OUR LAND BY FIRE AND BLOOD.


THE PEOPLE FROM HERE, THE XINJIN, ARE THE ONLY ONES WHO WERE ABLE TO RESIST HIM UNTIL NOW. BUT NOT FOR MUCH LONGER.
THAT'S WHY THE MISSION GIVEN TO YOUR FATHER AND HIS FRIENDS IS SO IMPORTANT FOR US. THEY ARE OUR LAST CHANCE TO BEAT OGOTAI'S DESTRUCTIVE POWER AND FREE THE LAND OF QA FROM HIS BLOODY FURY!
YOU'RE NOT HURTING TOO MUCH?
IT'S OKAY... IT'S BEARABLE.
IT'LL BE EASIER TO WALK ON SOLID GROUND. I'M NOT SORRY TO GET OUT OF THIS HORRID LIQUID FINALLY.
YOU... YOU'RE BURNING UP!?
IT'S NOT SERIOUS... A BIT OF FEVER, I'M SURE... IT'LL PASS...
THORGAL WILL SUCCEED. HE ALWAYS SUCCEEDS IN EVERYTHING HE DOES.
I'M SURE OF IT, JOLAN. ALAS.
WHY ALAS? DON'T YOU WANT HIM TO SUCCEED?
I WANT THE MISSION TO SUCCEED. BUT I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT I WOULD HAVE GLADLY GIVEN WHATEVER IS LEFT OF MY LIFE FOR ANYBODY OTHER THAN THORGAL TO BE MIXED UP IN THIS. BUT TELL ME, NOW...
WHAT DO YOU HOPE TO DO WITH THAT KNIFE?
BUT... WHAT? I THOUGHT...
MY EYES HAVE LOST LIGHT, JOLAN, BUT I CAN STILL READ YOUR MIND AND USE YOUR EYES. HOLD OUT YOUR ARM AND LOOK AT THAT KNIFE THAT YOU'RE HOLDING SO TIGHTLY. LOOK CLOSELY!

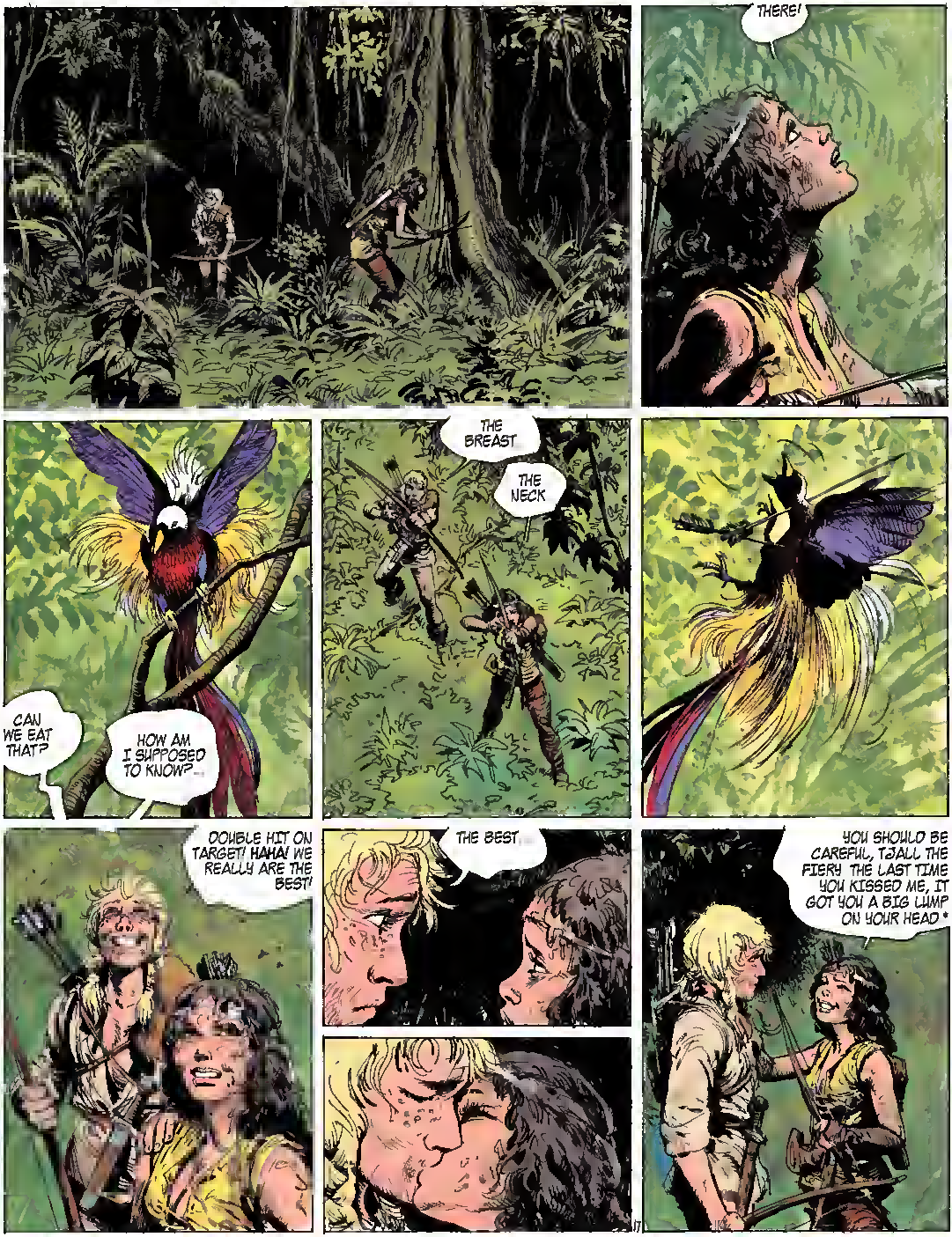

LIKE THIS? WHAT'S HA .
?
?!?
IT DISAPPEARED!! IT'S . IT'S MAGIC! ARE YOU REALLY A GOD, THEN? OR A WIZARD?..
NEITHER ONE NOR THE OTHER. I HAVE CERTAIN POWERS, IT'S TRUE...


I USED YOUR EYES AND GUIDED YOUR MIND, BUT IT WAS NOT I WHO MADE THE KNIFE DISAPPEAR, JOLAN...
IT WAS YOU!

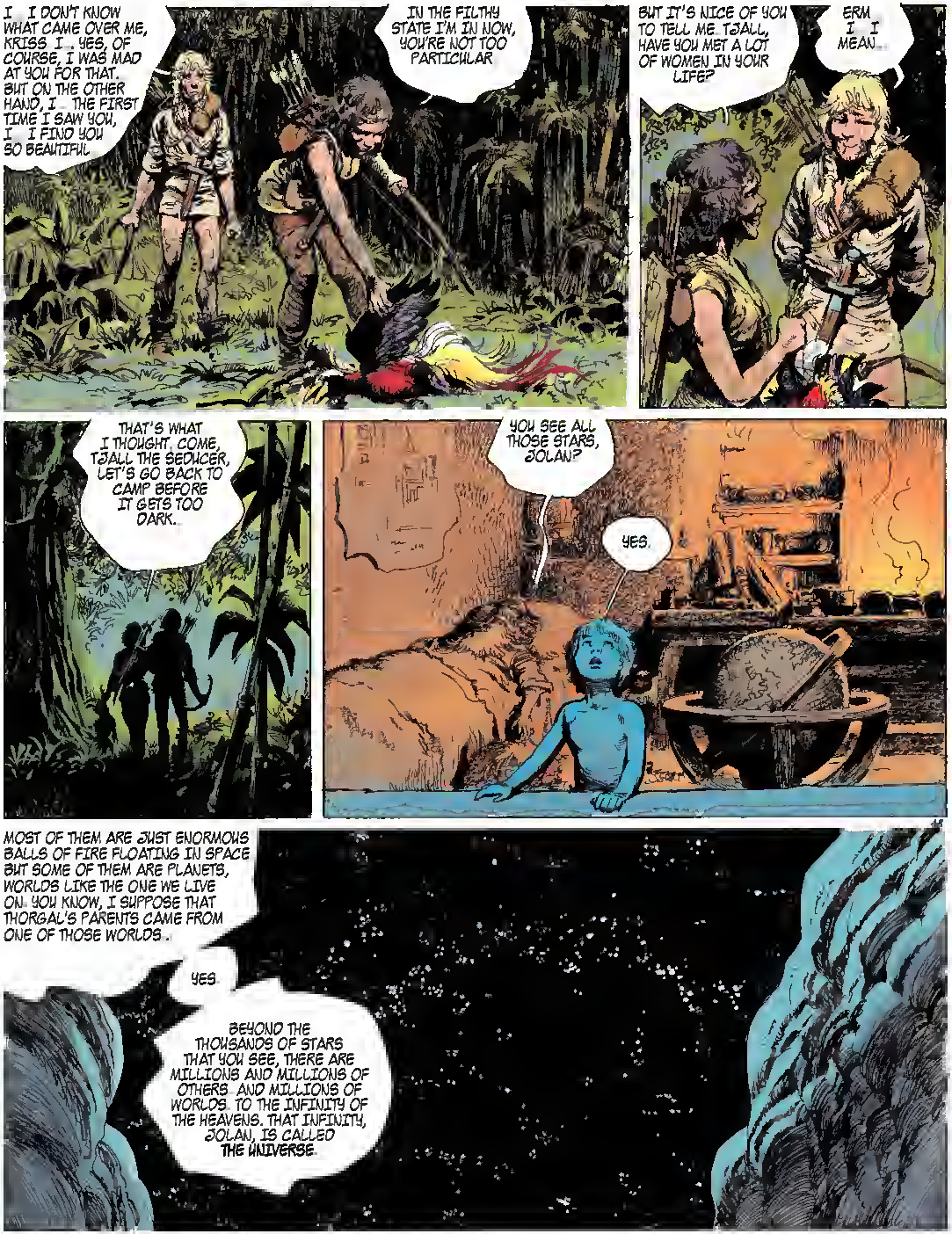

I'M TERRIBLY WORRIED, TJALL. HIS FEVER IS RISING MORE AND MORE
IT MUST BE HIS INJURY TIRING HIM OUT. HE'LL BE BETTER AFTER A NIGHT OF REST, DON'T WORRY
I DON'T KNOW IF...

GO AND WATCH THE FIRE, AARICIA. WITH THIS DAMP WOOD, I HAD SOME TROUBLE GETTING IT TO TAKE. YOU, TJALL, YOU'RE COMING WITH ME. WE'RE GOING TO TRY TO CATCH SOMETHING TO EAT.

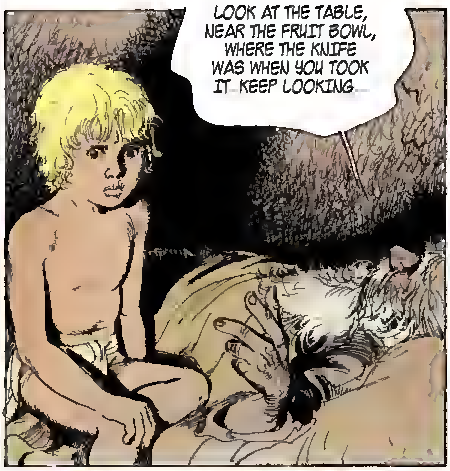
AND HURRY UP. IT'LL SOON BE NIGHT.
ALL RIGHT, ALL RIGHT, I'M COMING.

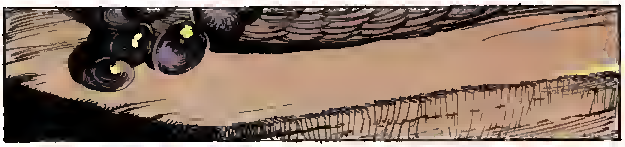


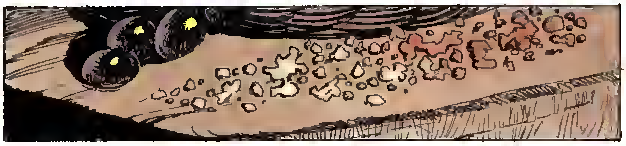
*SEE THE ARCHERS

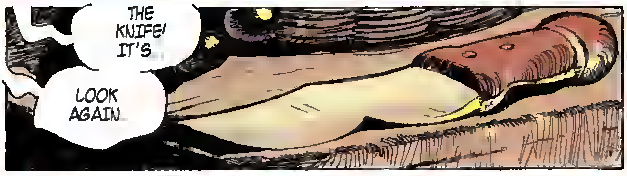

I... I DON'T KNOW WHAT CAME OVER ME, KRISS... I... YES, OF COURSE, I WAS MAD AT YOU FOR THAT. BUT ON THE OTHER HAND, I... THE FIRST TIME I SAW YOU, I... I FIND YOU SO BEAUTIFUL...
IN THE FILTHY STATE I'M IN NOW, YOU'RE NOT TOO PARTICULAR...
BUT IT'S NICE OF YOU TO TELL ME... TJALL, HAVE YOU MET A LOT OF WOMEN IN YOUR LIFE?
ERM... I... I MEAN...
THAT'S WHAT I THOUGHT. COME, TJALL THE SEDUCER, LET'S GO BACK TO CAMP BEFORE IT GETS TOO DARK...
YOU SEE ALL THOSE STARS, JOLAN?
YES.
MOST OF THEM ARE JUST ENORMOUS BALLS OF FIRE FLOATING IN SPACE BUT SOME OF THEM ARE PLANETS, WORLDS LIKE THE ONE WE LIVE ON. YOU KNOW, I SUPPOSE THAT THORGAL'S PARENTS CAME FROM ONE OF THOSE WORLDS...
YES.
BEYOND THE THOUSANDS OF STARS THAT YOU SEE, THERE ARE MILLIONS AND MILLIONS OF OTHERS. AND MILLIONS OF WORLDS. TO THE INFINITY OF THE HEAVENS. THAT INFINITY, JOLAN, IS CALLED THE UNIVERSE.

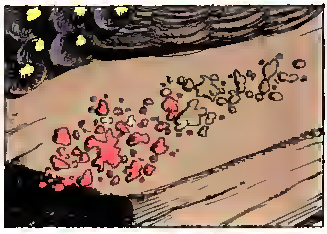
THE SECRET KNOWLEDGE IS THAT EVERYTHING THAT SURROUNDS US IS IN THE IMAGE OF THIS UNIVERSE. EACH THING, EACH BEING, FROM THE MOST MINUTE SPECK OF DUST TO THE MOST GIGANTIC COLOSSUS, IS SEEMINGLY COMPOSED OF MILLIONS OF STARS. MINISCULE STARS, INVISIBLE TO THE NAKED EYE, LINKED TO EACH OTHER BY ENORMOUS FORCES THROUGH THE IMMENSE VOIDS
THOSE MINISCULE STARS ARE ALL THE SAME. IT'S THE DIFFERENT WAYS THAT THEY ARE ASSEMBLED THAT GIVES DIFFERENT NATURES AND SHAPES TO THINGS
I... I DON'T UNDERSTAND VERY WELL
I KNOW, JOLAN, YOU'RE STILL JUST A SMALL BOY. BUT I HAVE SO LITTLE TIME LEFT... EVERYTHING I TELL YOU WILL STAY IN YOUR MEMORY. AND LATER, WHEN YOU REMEMBER MY WORDS, YOU WILL UNDERSTAND. YOU WILL LEARN TO SEE.
THE INHABITANTS OF THORGAL'S HOME WORLD SPENT THOUSANDS OF YEARS DEVELOPING THEIR TRUE VISION OF THINGS, BEYOND APPEARANCE, AND THEY LEARNT TO LIBERATE AND CONTROL THE FORMIDABLE UNUSED ENERGY CURRENTS THAT OUR CEREBRAL WAVES PRODUCE
YOU, YOUNG JOLAN, YOU POSSESS THESE ENERGY WAVES. I CAN FEEL THEM FLOW FROM YOU LIKE AN IMPRISONED TORRENT BEING SET FREE. YOUR FATHER DOES NOT HAVE THIS ABILITY. BUT HE PASSED DOWN TO YOU, WITHOUT KNOWING IT, YOUR ANCESTORS' HERITAGE. THIS ENERGY. YOU MUST LEARN TO MASTER IT.
IT'S IMPORTANT, AS THESE ENERGY WAVES CAN BE STRONGER, IF YOU WANT THEM TO BE, THAN THE FORCES THAT LINK THE STARS TO EACH OTHER FORMING THINGS. THUS, YOU CAN MODIFY THEIR ARRANGEMENT AT YOUR WILL—TRANSFORMING THE VERY NATURE OF ALL MATTER!
YOU MEAN TO SAY THAT I CAN MAKE OBJECTS, LIKE THE KNIFE, DISAPPEAR?
YES. OR CHANGE SHAPE OR WEIGHT OR YOU CAN EVEN CREATE THEM.
THE KNIFE DISAPPEARED BECAUSE THE SMALL STARS THAT FORMED THE METAL IT WAS MADE OF WERE SEPARATED. BUT THE STARS, THEY STILL EXIST AROUND US. WITH BILLIONS OF OTHERS, ALL IDENTICAL. THEY ARE WHAT YOU MUST LEARN TO SEE, JOLAN. LOOK...

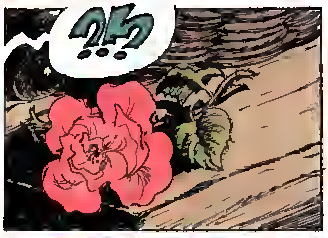

LOOK AT THE TABLE, NEAR THE FRUIT BOWL, WHERE THE KNIFE WAS WHEN YOU TOOK IT. KEEP LOOKING...






THE KNIFE! IT'S...
LOOK AGAIN...

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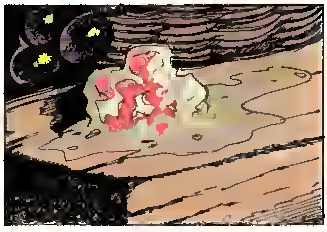
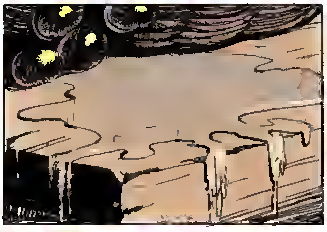
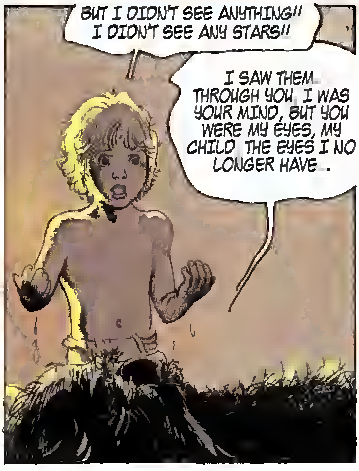
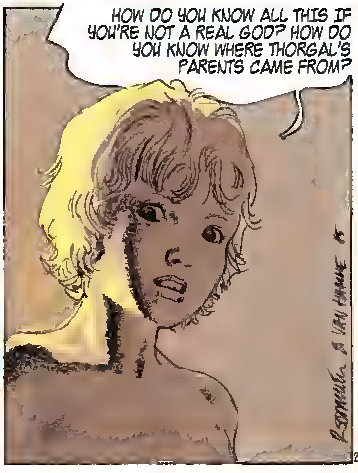


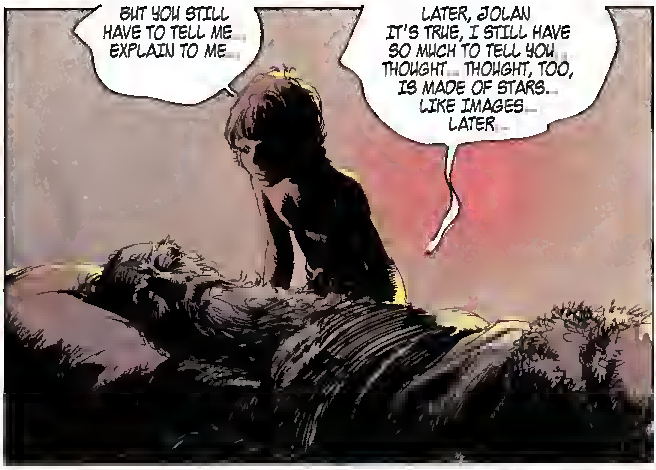


REAL WATER! THAT'S... THAT'S AMAZING!
AND IT'S YOU WHO DID IT ALL, JOLAN. THEY WERE YOUR ENERGY WAVES CONTROLLED BY MY MIND...


BUT I DIDN'T SEE ANYTHING!! I DIDN'T SEE ANY STARS!!
I SAW THEM... THROUGH YOU. I WAS YOUR MIND, BUT YOU WERE MY EYES, MY CHILD. THE EYES I NO LONGER HAVE...

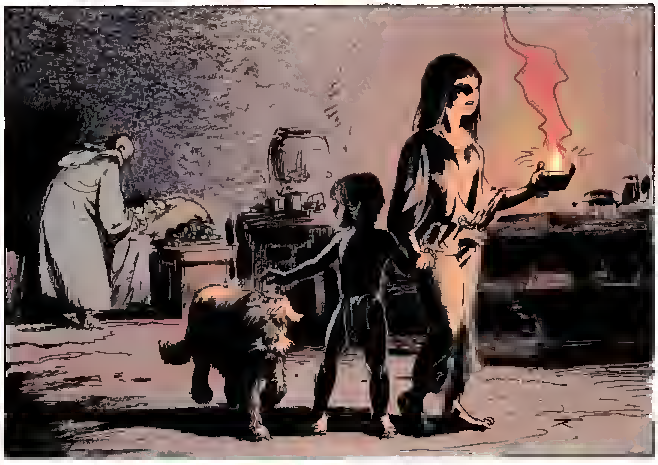

HOW DO YOU KNOW ALL THIS IF YOU'RE NOT A REAL GOD? HOW DO YOU KNOW WHERE THORGAL'S PARENTS CAME FROM?

IT'S TIME FOR YOU TO GO BACK TO YOUR ROOM, JOLAN. I'M TIRED...


BUT YOU STILL HAVE TO TELL ME... EXPLAIN TO ME...
LATER, JOLAN IT'S TRUE, I STILL HAVE SO MUCH TO TELL YOU... THOUGHT... THOUGHT, TOO, IS MADE OF STARS... LIKE IMAGES... LATER...

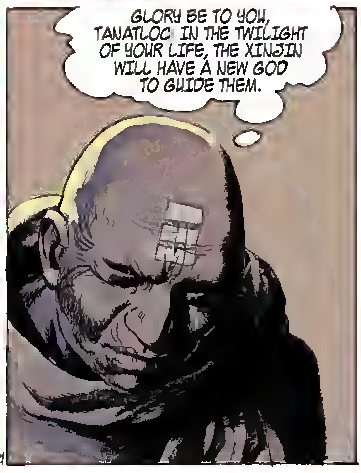
NO, NOW. LATER YOU COULD BE DEAD...
LEAVE HIM, JOLAN. HE IS SLEEPING...

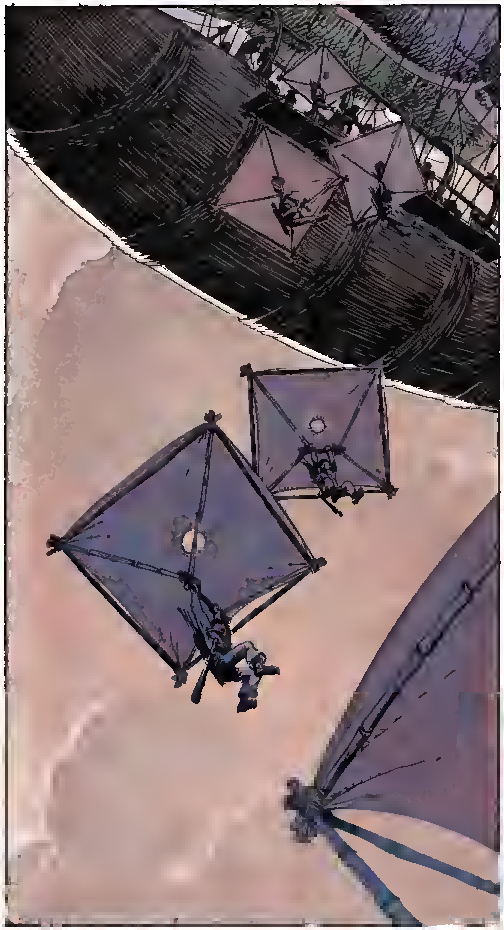
BUT...
WE'LL TAKE YOU BACK TO YOUR ROOM. DON'T WORRY. I'LL LOOK AFTER HIM...

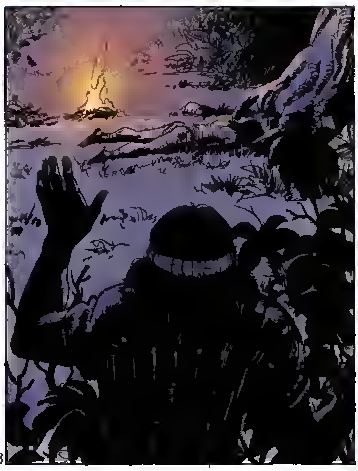


I HEARD PLENTY OF STRANGE SECRETS TONIGHT, MY LORD, AND PLENTY OF MYSTERIES THAT I HAVE NOT UNDERSTOOD...

BUT A SIGN APPEARED TO ME, A SIGN AS A MARK OF YOUR GREAT VISION, WHICH, IN THESE DARK YEARS, FILLS MY HEART WITH A DEEP JOY...

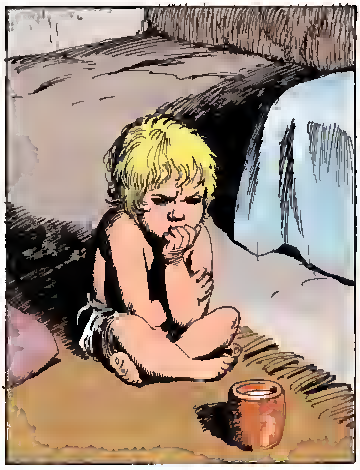

GLORY BE TO YOU, TANATLOC! IN THE TWILIGHT OF YOUR LIFE, THE XINJIN WILL HAVE A NEW GOD TO GUIDE THEM.

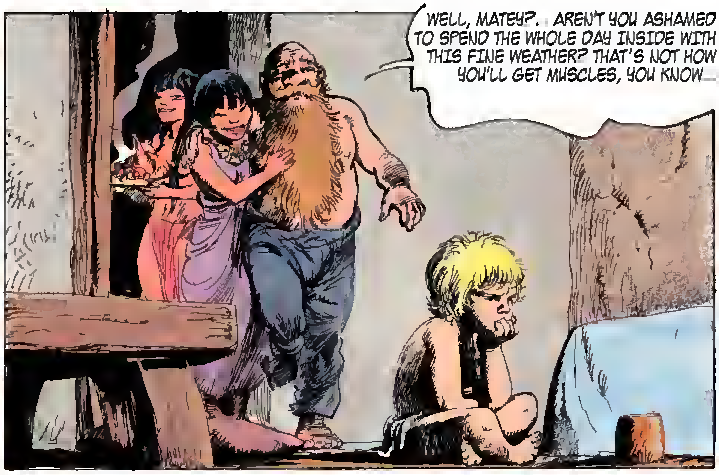




SHE!!

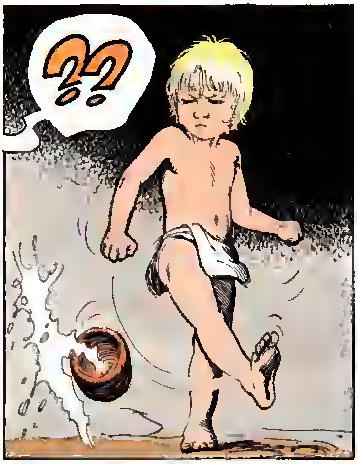
AND THERE'S OUR GUIDE! YOUR IDEA TO MAKE A FIRE AND ATTRACT A PATROL WAS EXCELLENT, THORGAL.
MAYBE... BUT WAS IT REALLY NECESSARY TO KILL ALL THESE POOR DEVILS?
YOU THINK THEY WOULD HAVE HESITATED? WE ARE ON A MISSION IN ENEMY TERRITORY, MY DEAR ONCE AND FOR ALL, GET THAT INTO YOUR PRETTY LITTLE HEAD.
ANYWAY, WE COULDN'T HAVE MADE THEM ALL PRISONERS, OR RUN THE RISK OF LEAVING THEM BEHIND US. IT WAS THE ONLY WAY TO CAPTURE SOMEONE ABLE TO TAKE US TO MAYAXATL.
SO YOU THINK SHE'S RIGHT NOW? WHAT IF THIS MAN REFUSES TO GUIDE US?
DON'T WORRY. AFTER A SIMPLE LITTLE "CONVERSATION," HE'LL TAKE US TO HELL. IF I ASK HIM. ISN'T THAT RIGHT, MY SWEET?
ENOUGH TALKING NOW. LET'S PUT OUT THE FIRE AND GET OUT OF HERE BEFORE OUR FRIENDS UP THERE SEND ANOTHER PATROL TO LOOK FOR THE FIRST ONE.




WELL, MATEY?. AREN'T YOU ASHAMED TO SPEND THE WHOLE DAY INSIDE WITH THIS FINE WEATHER? THAT'S NOT HOW YOU'LL GET MUSCLES, YOU KNOW...

THANKS, PIGEON. BY MY NAME, YOU'RE THE PRETTIEST SPARE LEG I'VE EVER LEANED ON.
SPEHL-EGG?

WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU, JOLAN? COME AND EAT. IT LOOKS DELICIOUS.
EAT.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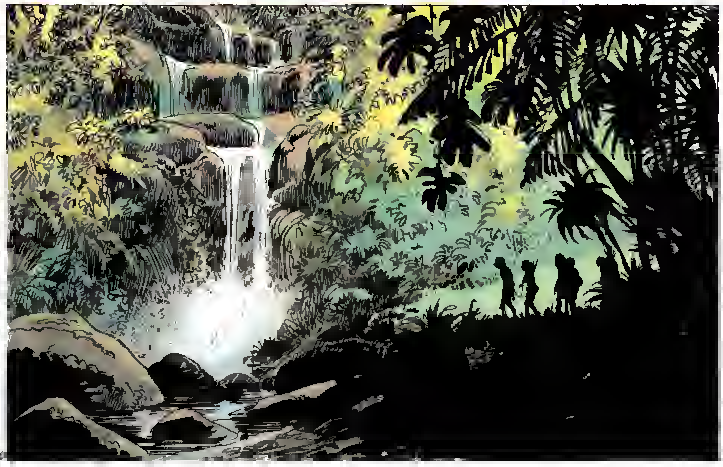
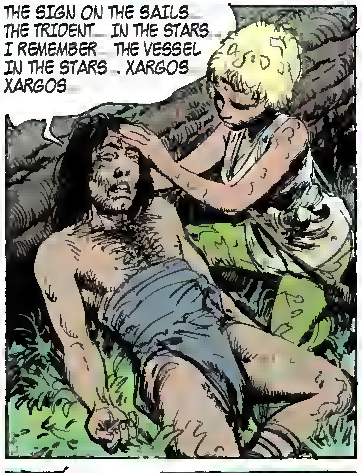
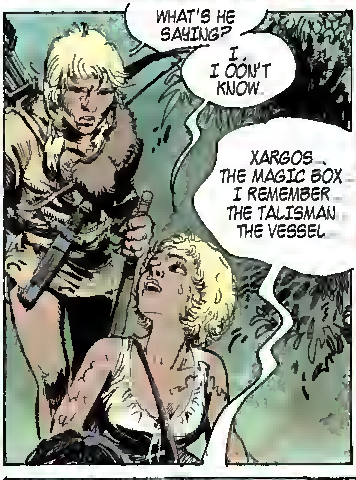
I WON'T MAKE IT!... I'LL NEVER MAKE IT!...



FINALLY SOME FRESH WATER! . HE'S VERY GOOD, THIS BOY
YEAH... ALL THAT'S MISSING IS A NICE LITTLE INN WITH SOFT BEDS AND A WELL-STOCKED CELLAR.

WITH THE XINJIN GOLD, WE'LL BE ABLE TO BUY OURSELVES THE BEST INNS ON EARTH, TJALL.
TIE UP OUR FRIEND FOR THE NIGHT, NICE AND TIGHT. I'VE GOT THINGS TO DO..


THE SIGN ON THE SAILS... THE TRIDENT... IN THE STARS... I REMEMBER... THE VESSEL IN THE STARS... XARGOS... XARGOS...

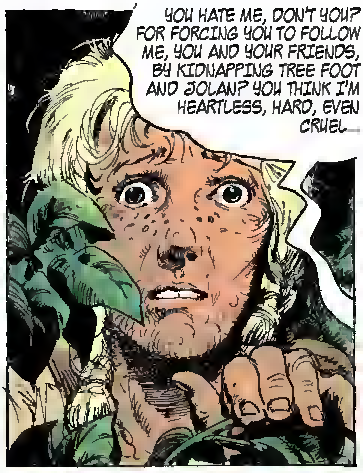

WHAT'S HE SAYING?
I... I DON'T KNOW.
XARGOS... THE MAGIC BOX... I REMEMBER... THE TALISMAN... THE VESSEL...

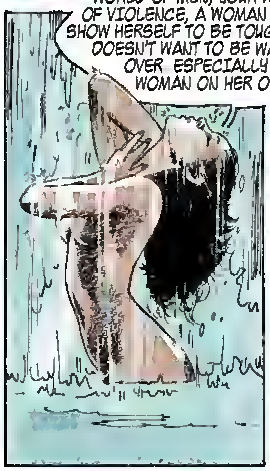
THORGAL CAN'T CARRY ON LIKE THIS, TJALL. THIS CURSED FEVER IS TAKING ALL HIS STRENGTH. WE HAVE TO STOP FOR TWO OR THREE DAYS, ENOUGH TIME FOR HIM TO GET BETTER.
YOU'RE RIGHT... I... I'LL GO AND TALK TO KRISS ABOUT IT.

KRISS? KRISS, WHERE ARE YOU?

??

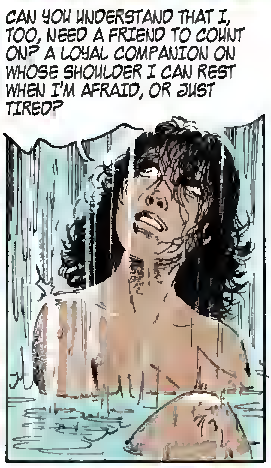
I KNOW YOU'RE THERE, TJALL... NO, STAY... IN FACT, I WANTED TO TALK TO YOU...


YOU HATE ME, DON'T YOU? FOR FORCING YOU TO FOLLOW ME, YOU AND YOUR FRIENDS, BY KIDNAPPING TREE FOOT AND JOLAN? YOU THINK I'M HEARTLESS, HARD, EVEN CRUEL...

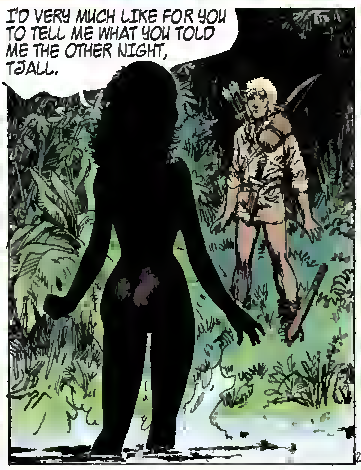

BUT TO SURVIVE IN YOUR WORLD OF MEN, YOUR WORLD OF VIOLENCE, A WOMAN HAS TO SHOW HERSELF TO BE TOUGH IF SHE DOESN'T WANT TO BE WALKED OVER. ESPECIALLY A WOMAN ON HER OWN

I AM ON MY OWN, TJALL. ALONE AND OFTEN... LOST...

LOST?... YOU?
I KNOW I MAY SEEM TOUGH, ON THE OUTSIDE, BUT DO YOU REALLY THINK THAT I'M DIFFERENT FROM OTHER WOMEN?

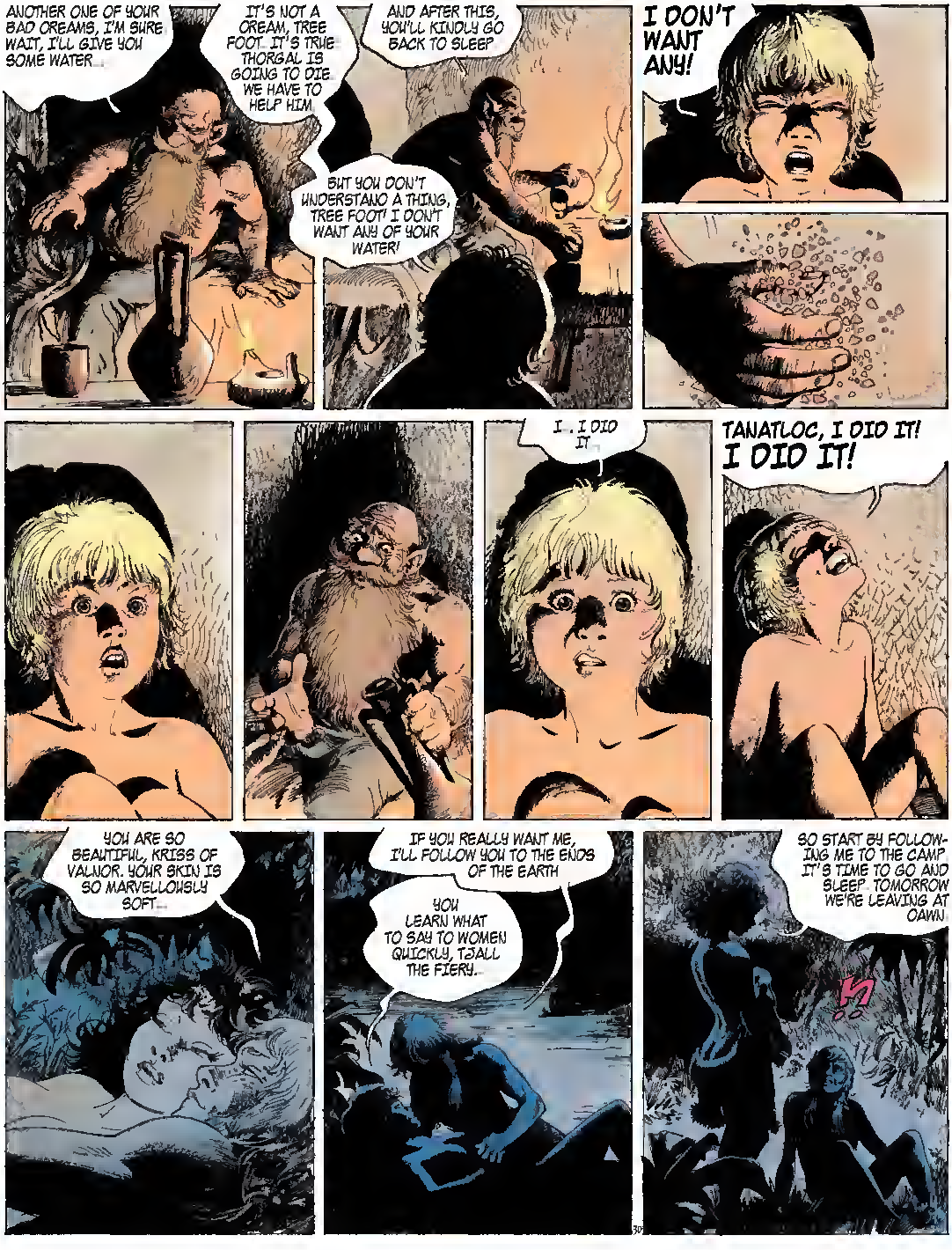

CAN YOU UNDERSTAND THAT I, TOO, NEED A FRIEND TO COUNT ON? A LOYAL COMPANION ON WHOSE SHOULDER I CAN REST WHEN I'M AFRAID, OR JUST TIRED?

A YOUNG AND FIERY MAN WHO KNOWS HOW TO PROTECT ME... A GREAT ARCHER WITH WHOM TO SHARE THE EXCITEMENT OF ADVENTURE... A TENDER AND HAPPY BOY I COULD LOVE...


I'D VERY MUCH LIKE FOR YOU TO TELL ME WHAT YOU TOLD ME THE OTHER NIGHT, TJALL.

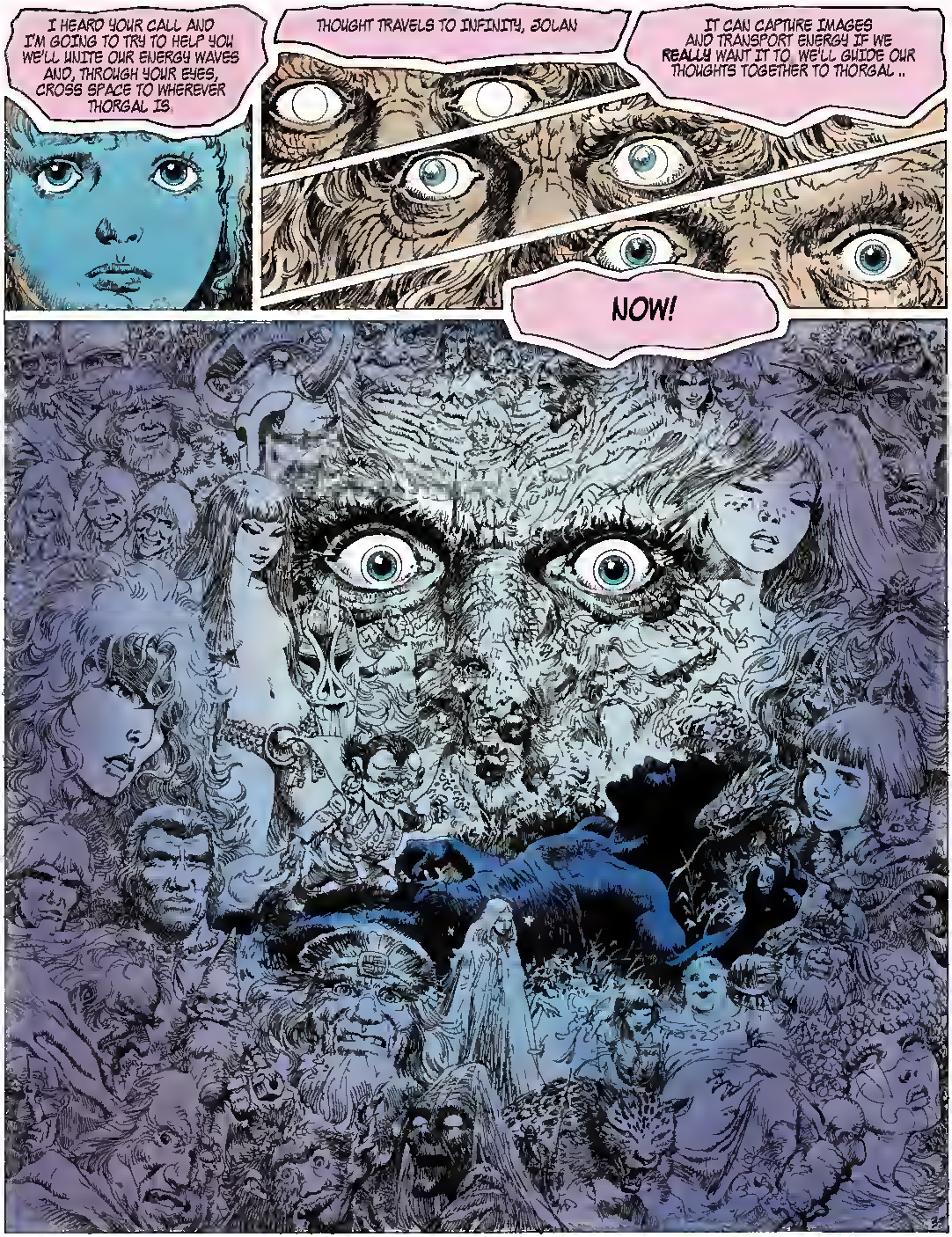
WHERE DID THEY GET TO?

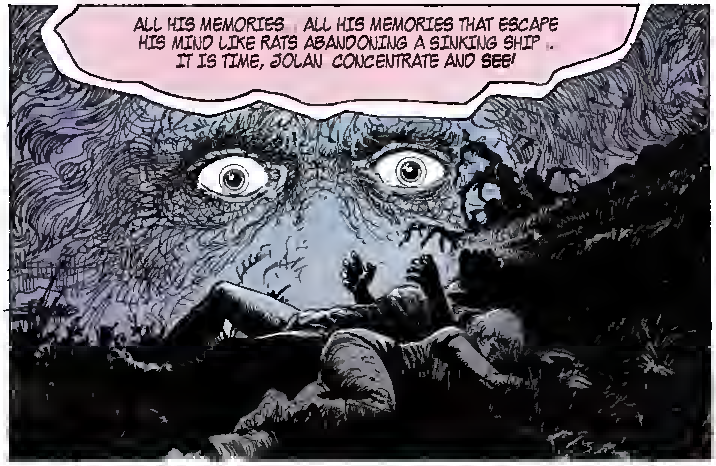
THE GODDESS THE GODDESS WITH NO NAME
IT'S HER... THE GODDESS WITH NO NAME... IT'S HER... I SEE HER... I RECOGNISE HER...
THORGAL, MY LOVE, CALM DOWN, PLEASE .
THORGAL THORGAL THORGAL
THORGAL THORGAL
THORGAL!
WHAT? WHAT IS IT? WHAT'S WRONG?
I SAW THORGAL, TREE FOOT! HE'S SICK! HE'S GOING TO DIE!

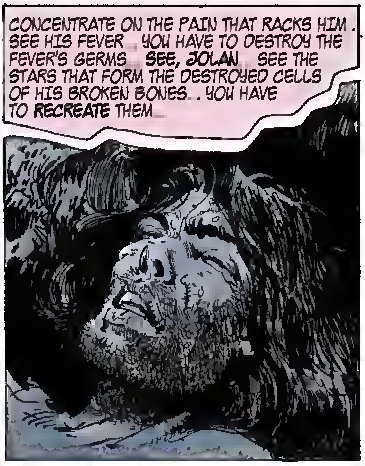

ANOTHER ONE OF YOUR BAD DREAMS, I'M SURE. WAIT, I'LL GIVE YOU SOME WATER...
IT'S NOT A DREAM, TREE FOOT. IT'S TRUE. THORGAL IS GOING TO DIE. WE HAVE TO HELP HIM.
AND AFTER THIS, YOU'LL KINDLY GO BACK TO SLEEP.
BUT YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND A THING, TREE FOOT! I DON'T WANT ANY OF YOUR WATER!
I DON'T WANT ANY!
I... I DID IT...
TANATLOC, I DID IT! I DID IT!
YOU ARE SO BEAUTIFUL, KRISS OF VALNOR. YOUR SKIN IS SO MARVELLOUSLY SOFT...
IF YOU REALLY WANT ME, I'LL FOLLOW YOU TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH.
YOU LEARN WHAT TO SAY TO WOMEN QUICKLY, TJALL THE FIERY...
SO START BY FOLLOWING ME TO THE CAMP. IT'S TIME TO GO AND SLEEP. TOMORROW WE'RE LEAVING AT DAWN.
?!

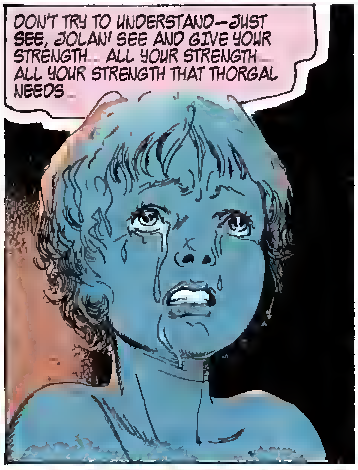
ERM... ABOUT THAT... COULDN'T WE STAY HERE A DAY OR TWO? WHILE THORGAL GETS BETTER?
YOU KNOW VERY WELL THAT THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE...
RIGHT NOW, THE CHAAMS KNOW FOR SURE THAT WE'RE HERE. THEY'LL BE LOOKING FOR US, AND EVERY HOUR LOST LOWERS OUR CHANCES OF REACHING MAYAXATL WITHOUT BEING SEEN...
BUT HOW WILL WE TAKE THORGAL? HE CAN HARDLY WALK...
WE WON'T TAKE HIM.
WHAT!?
I KNOW THIS KIND OF FEVER, TJALL. IT'S UNFORGIVING. THORGAL IS CONDEMNED. INCURABLY. STAYING HERE UNTIL HE DIES WILL ONLY CONDEMN US, TOO.
BUT THAT'S NOT POSSIBLE, KRISS, AND EVEN IF... AARICIA WILL NEVER ACCEPT...
I'M SURE. WE WON'T TAKE HER EITHER.
ANYWAY, SHE'S NO USE TO US.
ABANDON THORGAL AND AARICIA!? HERE, IN THE MIDDLE OF THE WILD FOREST!? NO, THAT WOULD BE TOO DISHONOURABLE!
I... I REFUSE!...
ALREADY?

I UNDERSTAND YOUR REACTION, TJALL. YOU'RE YOUNG, IDEALISTIC, LOYAL. THAT'S WHAT I LIKE ABOUT YOU. BUT YOU HAVE TO LEARN TO LOOK REALITY STRAIGHT IN THE EYES, FIRMLY, WITHOUT TURNING YOUR HEAD, AS A MAN— ESPECIALLY WHEN THAT REALITY IS PAINFUL.
I... I CAN'T...
IT'S STUPID TO WANT TO PLAY THE HERO AND KILL YOURSELF. YOU HAVE TO BE A WINNER, TJALL. DEAD PEOPLE ARE ALWAYS WRONG. WINNERS, THEY'RE THE ONES WHO STAY ALIVE.
AND I DON'T WANT TO DIE. THINK OF THE GOLD WAITING FOR US, MY COMPANION... OF THE FREE LIFE FULL OF ADVENTURE THAT WE'LL LEAD, YOU AND ME... THINK OF ME, THE ONE YOU CHOSE... THE ONE WHO LOVES YOU...
BUT AARICIA CAN'T KNOW ANYTHING. THAT WOULD BE NEEDLESSLY CRUEL.
THORGAL... WHERE ARE YOU?
HELP ME, TANATLOC. HELP ME TO SEE THORGAL, WHEREVER HE'S IN DANGER. HELP ME TO HEAL HIM, TO SAVE HIM. I KNOW THAT YOU, YOU CAN DO IT...
I'M HERE, JOLAN. I'M WITH YOU.


I HEARD YOUR CALL AND I'M GOING TO TRY TO HELP YOU WE'LL UNITE OUR ENERGY WAVES AND, THROUGH YOUR EYES, CROSS SPACE TO WHEREVER THORGAL IS.
THOUGHT TRAVELS TO INFINITY, JOLAN
IT CAN CAPTURE IMAGES AND TRANSPORT ENERGY IF WE REALLY WANT IT TO. WE'LL GUIDE OUR THOUGHTS TOGETHER TO THORGAL ..
NOW!


ALL HIS MEMORIES... ALL HIS MEMORIES THAT ESCAPE HIS MIND LIKE RATS ABANDONING A SINKING SHIP... IT IS TIME, JOLAN CONCENTRATE AND SEE!

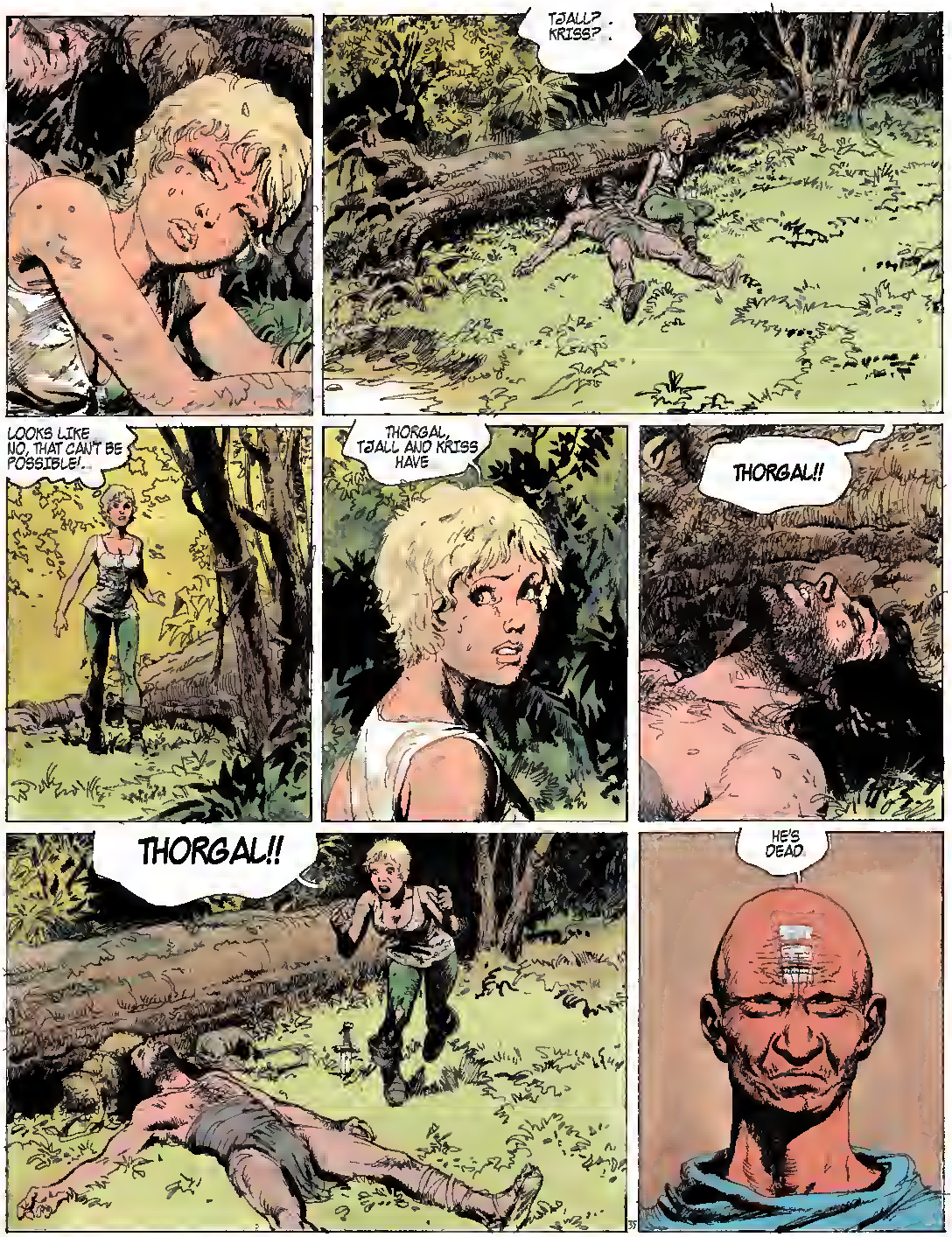

CONCENTRATE ON THE PAIN THAT RACKS HIM. SEE HIS FEVER... YOU HAVE TO DESTROY THE FEVER'S GERMS... SEE, JOLAN... SEE THE STARS THAT FORM THE DESTROYED CELLS OF HIS BROKEN BONES... YOU HAVE TO RECREATE THEM...


DON'T TRY TO UNDERSTAND—JUST SEE, JOLAN! SEE AND GIVE YOUR STRENGTH... ALL YOUR STRENGTH... ALL YOUR STRENGTH THAT THORGAL NEEDS...

ALL YOUR STRENGTH, JOLAN! JOIN YOUR STRENGTH TO MINE THROUGH SPACE... GIVE YOUR STRENGTH AND SEE... SEE... SEE...

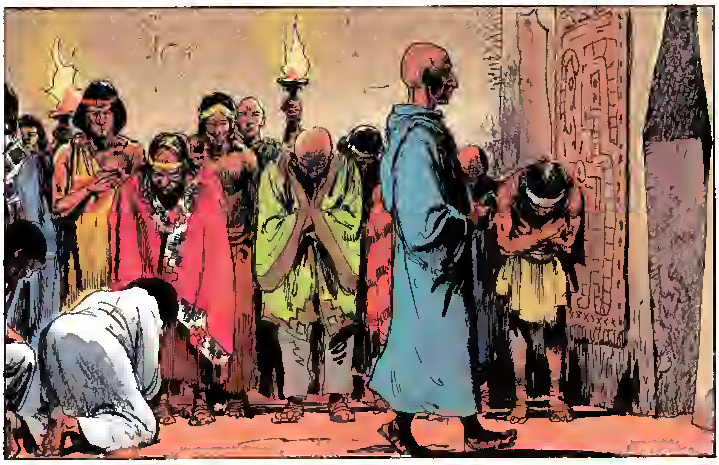
BE MY EYES... THAT I MAY GUIDE OUR ENERGIES... TO HIM... TO DEFEAT THE PAIN... TO REBUILD WHAT IS DESTROYED. ALL YOUR STRENGTH, JOLAN...

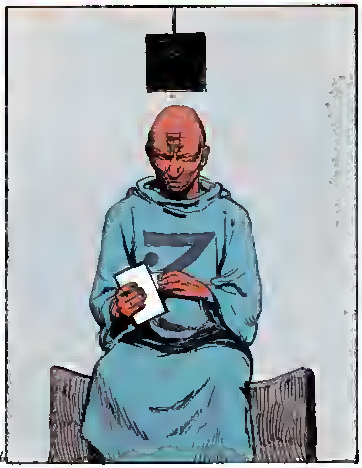
GIVE YOUR STRENGTH, MORE MORE... SEE, JOLAN CONCENTRATE MORE MORE MORE MORE MORE

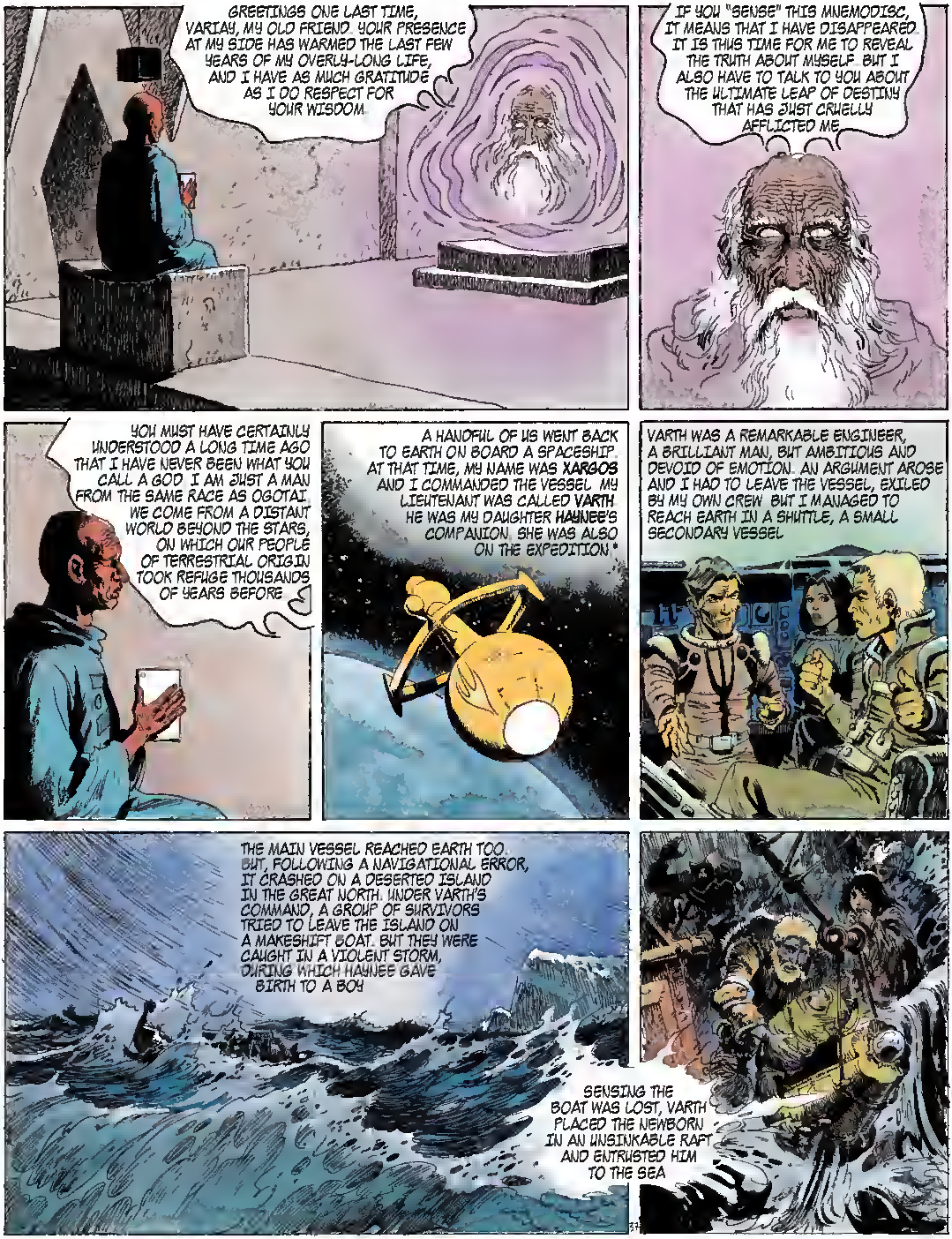

TJALL? KRISS?
LOOKS LIKE NO, THAT CAN'T BE POSSIBLE!...
THORGAL, TJALL AND KRISS HAVE
THORGAL!!
THORGAL!!
HE'S DEAD.

HIS EARTHLY SPIRIT HAS LEFT US THIS NIGHT. OUR LORD TANATLOC HAS GONE BACK TO THE ETERNAL WORLD OF THE GODS, WHENCE HE DESCENDED TO GUIDE OUR PEOPLE. THE XINJIN WILL ETERNALLY HONOUR HIS NAME AND HIS MEMORY!

NOW I MUST, WITH THIS MAGIC DISC THAT HE LEFT US, LEARN OF HIS LAST WISHES. I WILL COME BACK TO SHARE THEM WITH YOU.

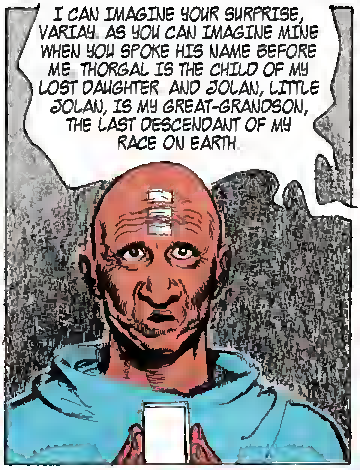


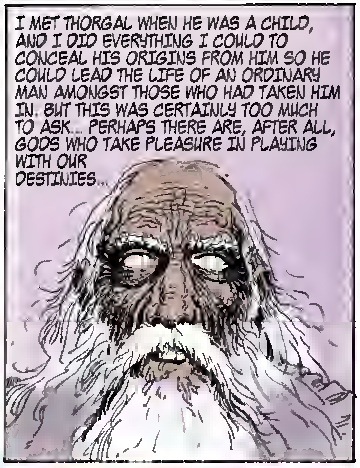


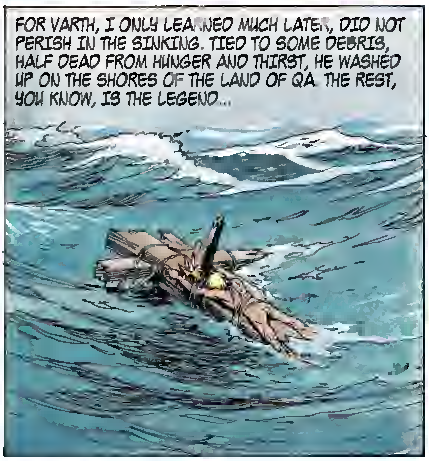


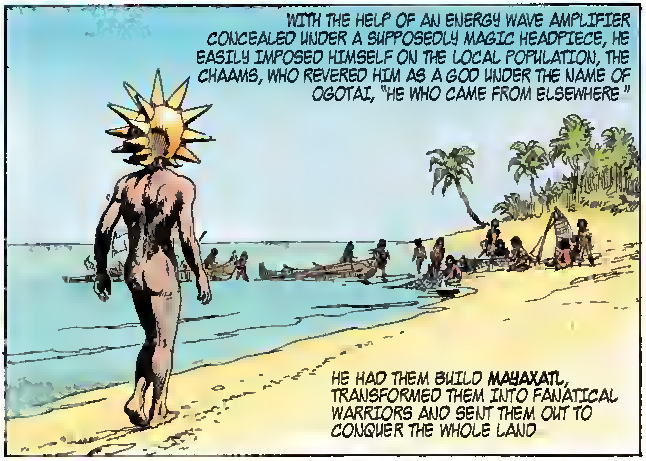
*SEE *CHILD OF THE STARS*

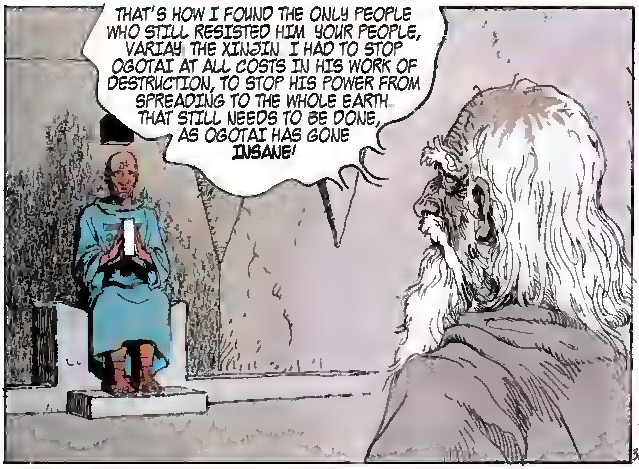
THE BOAT SANK SHORTLY AFTER, BUT THE CHILD WAS SAVED. PICKED UP BY SAILOR WARRIORS FROM BEYOND THE GREAT WATER—THOSE THEY CALL VIKINGS. THEY ADOPTED HIM AND NAMED HIM THORGAL AEGIRSSON, AFTER THE NAMES OF THEIR GODS THOR AND AEGIR.

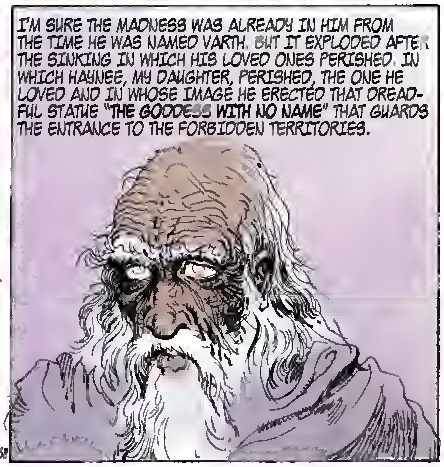

I CAN IMAGINE YOUR SURPRISE, VARIAH. AS YOU CAN IMAGINE MINE WHEN YOU SPOKE HIS NAME BEFORE ME. THORGAL IS THE CHILD OF MY LOST DAUGHTER AND JOLAN, LITTLE JOLAN, IS MY GREAT-GRANDSON, THE LAST DESCENDANT OF MY RACE ON EARTH.

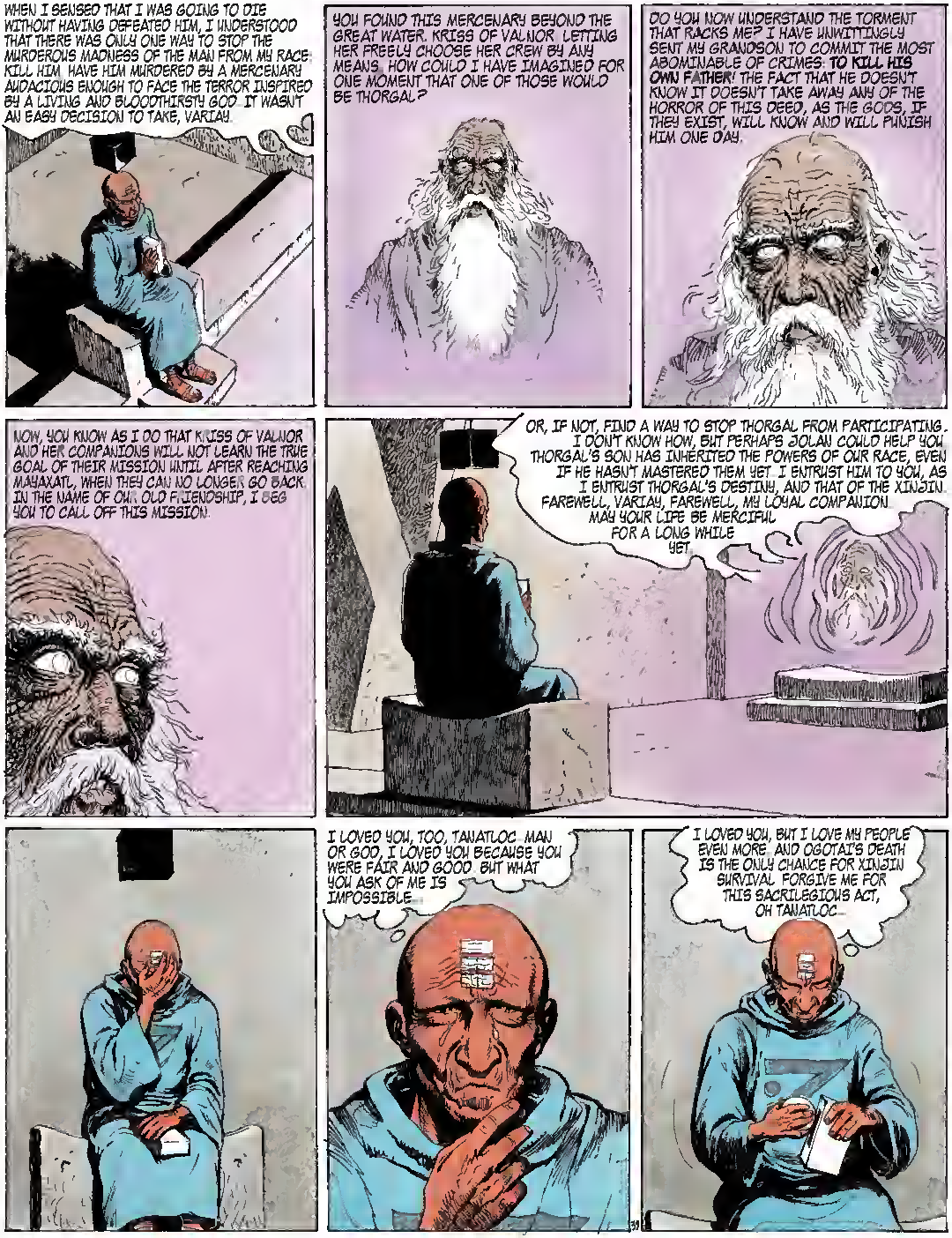

I MET THORGAL WHEN HE WAS A CHILD, AND I DID EVERYTHING I COULD TO CONCEAL HIS ORIGINS FROM HIM SO HE COULD LEAD THE LIFE OF AN ORDINARY MAN AMONGST THOSE WHO HAD TAKEN HIM IN. BUT THIS WAS CERTAINLY TOO MUCH TO ASK... PERHAPS THERE ARE, AFTER ALL, GODS WHO TAKE PLEASURE IN PLAYING WITH OUR DESTINIES...


FOR VARTH, I ONLY LEARNED MUCH LATER, DID NOT PERISH IN THE SINKING. TIED TO SOME DEBRIS, HALF DEAD FROM HUNGER AND THIRST, HE WASHED UP ON THE SHORES OF THE LAND OF QA. THE REST, YOU KNOW, IS THE LEGEND...


WITH THE HELP OF AN ENERGY WAVE AMPLIFIER CONCEALED UNDER A SUPPOSEDLY MAGIC HEADPIECE, HE EASILY IMPOSED HIMSELF ON THE LOCAL POPULATION, THE CHAAMS, WHO REVERED HIM AS A GOD UNDER THE NAME OF OGOTAI, "HE WHO CAME FROM ELSEWHERE."
HE HAD THEM BUILD MAYAXATL, TRANSFORMED THEM INTO FANATICAL WARRIORS AND SENT THEM OUT TO CONQUER THE WHOLE LAND.

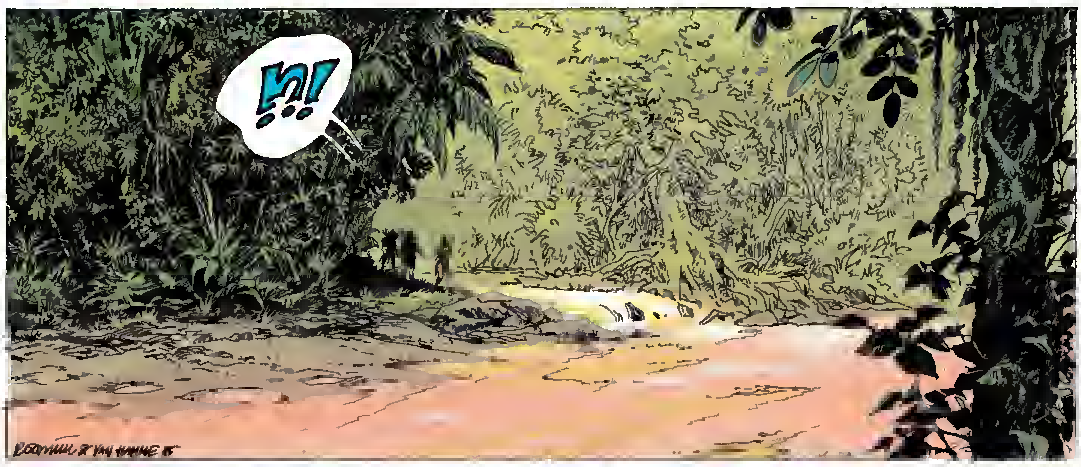

THAT'S HOW I FOUND THE ONLY PEOPLE WHO STILL RESISTED HIM. YOUR PEOPLE, VARIAH. THE XINJIN. I HAD TO STOP OGOTAI AT ALL COSTS IN HIS WORK OF DESTRUCTION, TO STOP HIS POWER FROM SPREADING TO THE WHOLE EARTH. THAT STILL NEEDS TO BE DONE, AS OGOTAI HAS GONE INSANE!


I'M SURE THE MADNESS WAS ALREADY IN HIM FROM THE TIME HE WAS NAMED VARTH. BUT IT EXPLODED AFTER THE SINKING IN WHICH HIS LOVED ONES PERISHED. IN WHICH HAYNEE, MY DAUGHTER, PERISHED, THE ONE HE LOVED AND IN WHOSE IMAGE HE ERECTED THAT DREADFUL STATUE "THE GODDESS WITH NO NAME" THAT GUARDS THE ENTRANCE TO THE FORBIDDEN TERRITORIES.


WHEN I SENSED THAT I WAS GOING TO DIE WITHOUT HAVING DEFEATED HIM, I UNDERSTOOD THAT THERE WAS ONLY ONE WAY TO STOP THE MURDEROUS MADNESS OF THE MAN FROM MY RACE: KILL HIM. HAVE HIM MURDERED BY A MERCENARY AUDACIOUS ENOUGH TO FACE THE TERROR INSPIRED BY A LIVING AND BLOODTHIRSTY GOD. IT WASN'T AN EASY DECISION TO TAKE, VARIAY.
YOU FOUND THIS MERCENARY BEYOND THE GREAT WATER. KRISS OF VALNOR. LETTING HER FREELY CHOOSE HER CREW BY ANY MEANS. HOW COULD I HAVE IMAGINED FOR ONE MOMENT THAT ONE OF THOSE WOULD BE THORGAL?
DO YOU NOW UNDERSTAND THE TORMENT THAT RACKS ME? I HAVE UNWITTINGLY SENT MY GRANDSON TO COMMIT THE MOST ABOMINABLE OF CRIMES: TO KILL HIS OWN FATHER! THE FACT THAT HE DOESN'T KNOW IT DOESN'T TAKE AWAY ANY OF THE HORROR OF THIS DEED, AS THE GODS, IF THEY EXIST, WILL KNOW AND WILL PUNISH HIM ONE DAY.
NOW, YOU KNOW AS I DO THAT KRISS OF VALNOR AND HER COMPANIONS WILL NOT LEARN THE TRUE GOAL OF THEIR MISSION UNTIL AFTER REACHING MAYAXATL, WHEN THEY CAN NO LONGER GO BACK. IN THE NAME OF OUR OLD FRIENDSHIP, I BEG YOU TO CALL OFF THIS MISSION.
OR, IF NOT, FIND A WAY TO STOP THORGAL FROM PARTICIPATING. I DON'T KNOW HOW, BUT PERHAPS JOLAN COULD HELP YOU. THORGAL'S SON HAS INHERITED THE POWERS OF OUR RACE, EVEN IF HE HASN'T MASTERED THEM YET. I ENTRUST HIM TO YOU, AS I ENTRUST THORGAL'S DESTINY, AND THAT OF THE XINJIN. FAREWELL, VARIAY, FAREWELL, MY LOYAL COMPANION. MAY YOUR LIFE BE MERCIFUL FOR A LONG WHILE YET.
I LOVED YOU, TOO, TANATLOC. MAN OR GOD, I LOVED YOU BECAUSE YOU WERE FAIR AND GOOD. BUT WHAT YOU ASK OF ME IS IMPOSSIBLE...
I LOVED YOU, BUT I LOVE MY PEOPLE EVEN MORE. AND OGOTAI'S DEATH IS THE ONLY CHANCE FOR XINJIN SURVIVAL. FORGIVE ME FOR THIS SACRILEGIOUS ACT, OH TANATLOC...

BUT NOBODY CAN EVER LEARN THE SECRET THAT YOU TOLD ME. NOBODY WILL EVER KNOW!

WHAT DID HE SAY?
WE MUST HAVE ARRIVED SOMEWHERE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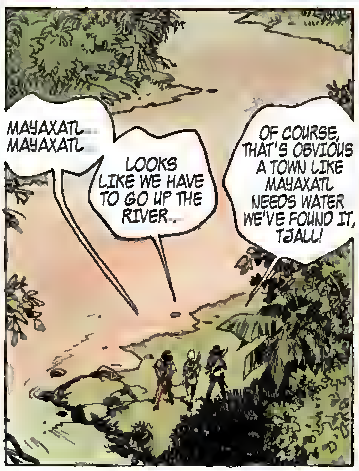
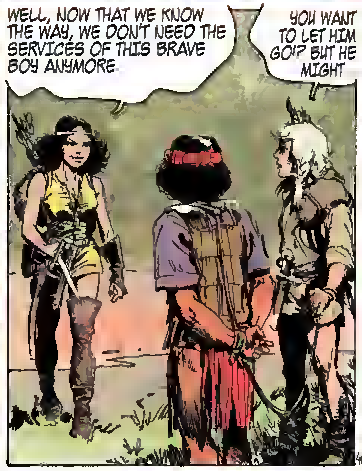
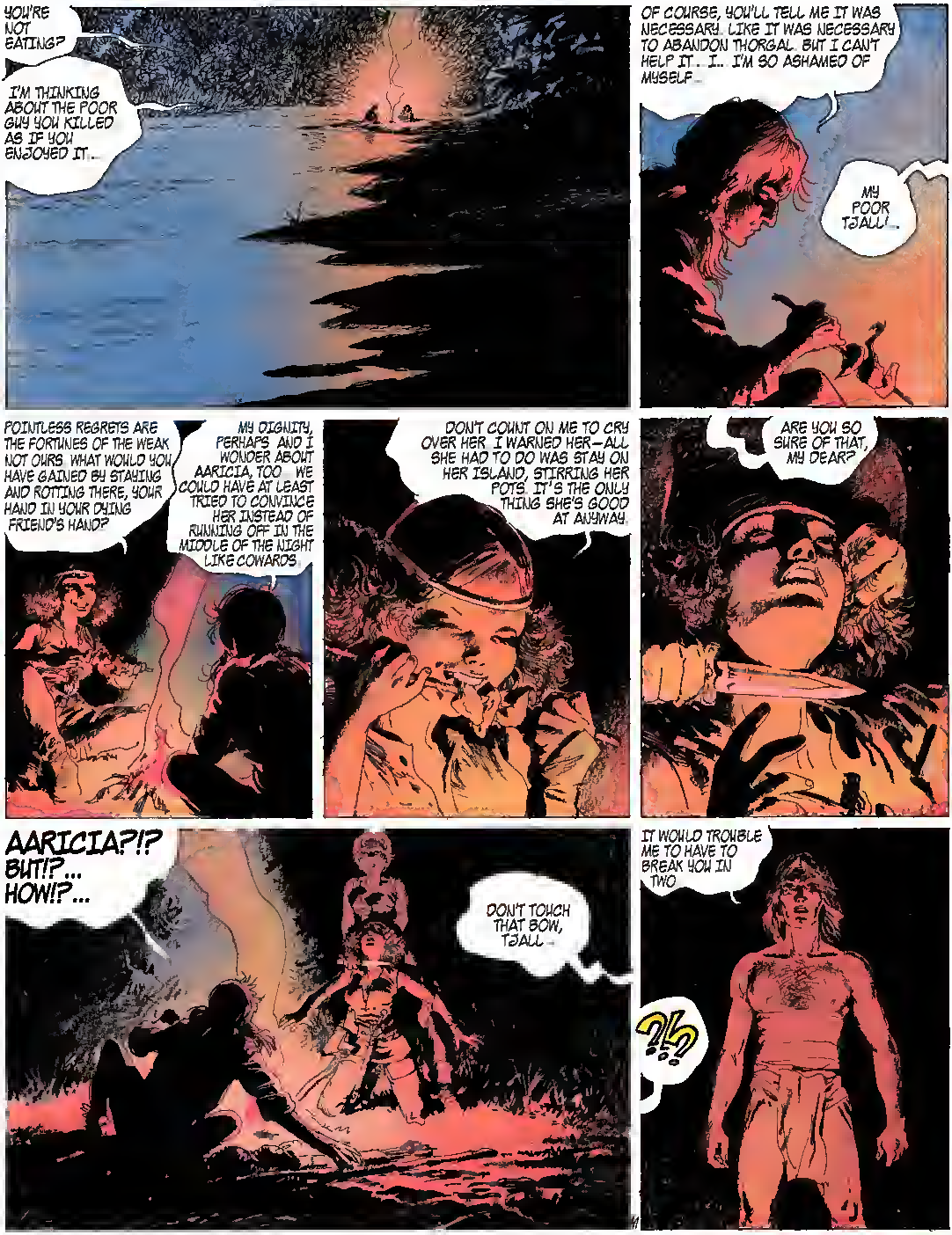
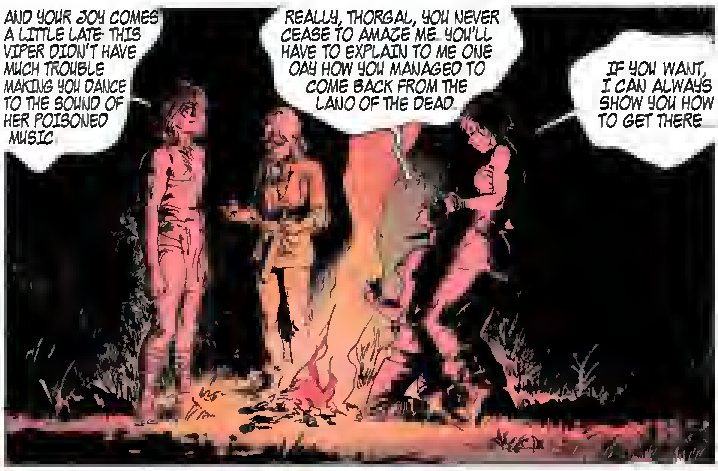

MAYAXATL... MAYAXATL...
LOOKS LIKE WE HAVE TO GO UP THE RIVER...
OF COURSE, THAT'S OBVIOUS. A TOWN LIKE MAYAXATL NEEDS WATER. WE'VE FOUND IT, TJALL!


WELL, NOW THAT WE KNOW THE WAY, WE DON'T NEED THE SERVICES OF THIS BRAVE BOY ANYMORE.
YOU WANT TO LET HIM GO? BUT HE MIGHT

WHO SAID LET HIM GO?


YOU'RE NOT EATING?
I'M THINKING ABOUT THE POOR GUY YOU KILLED AS IF YOU ENJOYED IT...
OF COURSE, YOU'LL TELL ME IT WAS NECESSARY. LIKE IT WAS NECESSARY TO ABANDON THORGAL. BUT I CAN'T HELP IT... I... I'M SO ASHAMED OF MYSELF...
MY POOR TJALL!...
POINTLESS REGRETS ARE THE FORTUNES OF THE WEAK, NOT OURS. WHAT WOULD YOU HAVE GAINED BY STAYING AND ROTTING THERE, YOUR HAND IN YOUR DYING FRIEND'S HAND?
MY DIGNITY, PERHAPS. AND I WONDER ABOUT AARICIA, TOO... WE COULD HAVE AT LEAST TRIED TO CONVINCE HER INSTEAD OF RUNNING OFF IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT LIKE COWARDS.
DON'T COUNT ON ME TO CRY OVER HER. I WARNED HER—ALL SHE HAD TO DO WAS STAY ON HER ISLAND, STIRRING HER POTS. IT'S THE ONLY THING SHE'S GOOD AT ANYWAY.
ARE YOU SO SURE OF THAT, MY DEAR?
AARICIA?!? BUT!?... HOW!?...
DON'T TOUCH THAT BOW, TJALL...
IT WOULD TROUBLE ME TO HAVE TO BREAK YOU IN TWO.
?!?

THORGAL! IT'S FANTASTIC! I'M SO HAPPY THAT... BUT HOW IN THE WORLD?...
NO THANKS TO YOUR TRUSTY FRIENDSHIP, THAT'S FOR SURE

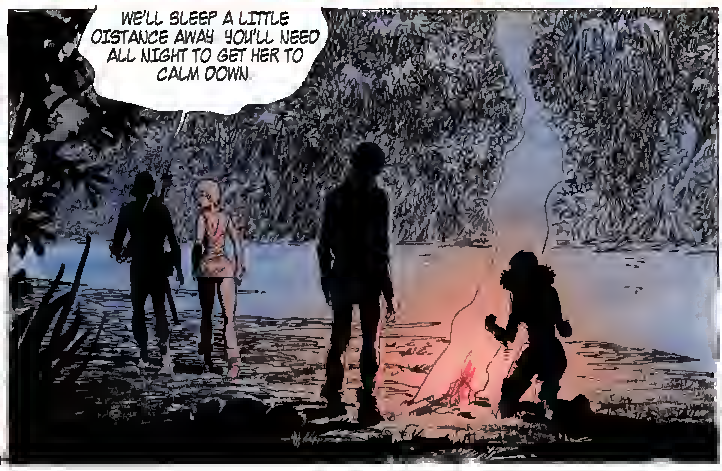

AND YOUR JOY COMES A LITTLE LATE. THIS VIPER DIDN'T HAVE MUCH TROUBLE MAKING YOU DANCE TO THE SOUND OF HER POISONED MUSIC.
REALLY, THORGAL, YOU NEVER CEASE TO AMAZE ME. YOU'LL HAVE TO EXPLAIN TO ME ONE DAY HOW YOU MANAGED TO COME BACK FROM THE LAND OF THE DEAD.
IF YOU WANT, I CAN ALWAYS SHOW YOU HOW TO GET THERE...

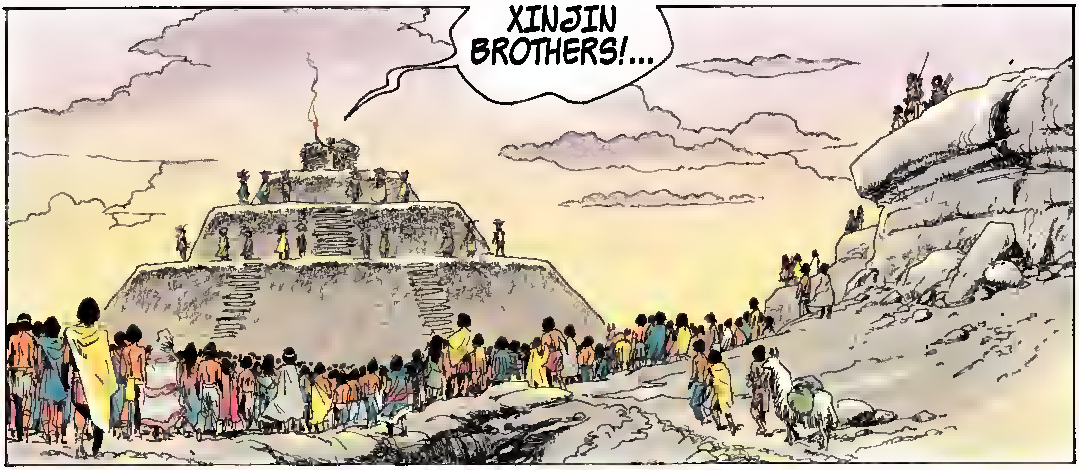
BUT I'M HAPPY THAT YOU MADE IT TOO... HEY, WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
I'M CLIPPING YOUR CLAWS TO REMOVE ANY TEMPTATION. YOU CAN LET HER GO, AARICIA.

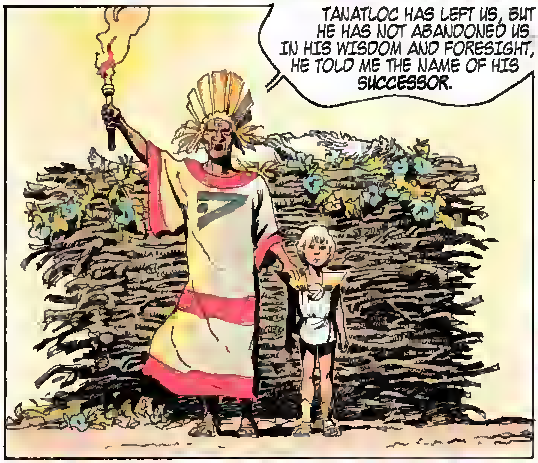
WE DON'T HAVE A CHOICE AND WILL TRY TO COMPLETE THIS GOLD-GRABBING MISSION TO THE END. BUT UNDER MY COMMAND.
WHAT!? I... I FORBID YOU!

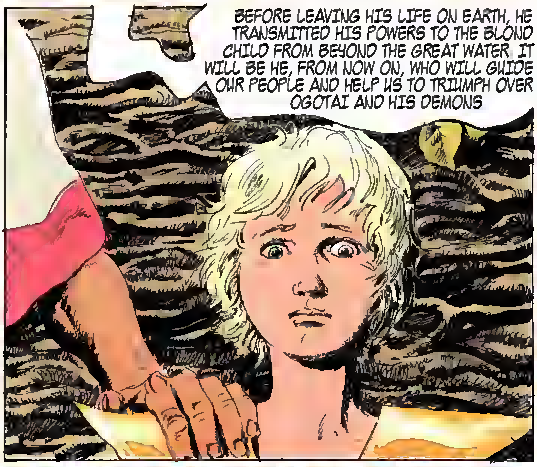
YOU CAN FORBID US NOTHING NOW, KRISS OF VALNOR. I KNOW WHERE JOLAN IS!
??

YOU KNOW WHERE?... HOW?... WHERE ARE THEY?
I KNOW, THAT'S ALL. DON'T ASK ME ANY QUESTIONS. JUST GO AND LOOK AFTER YOUR PRETTY FRIEND...


WE'LL SLEEP A LITTLE DISTANCE AWAY. YOU'LL NEED ALL NIGHT TO GET HER TO CALM DOWN.


XINJIN BROTHERS!...

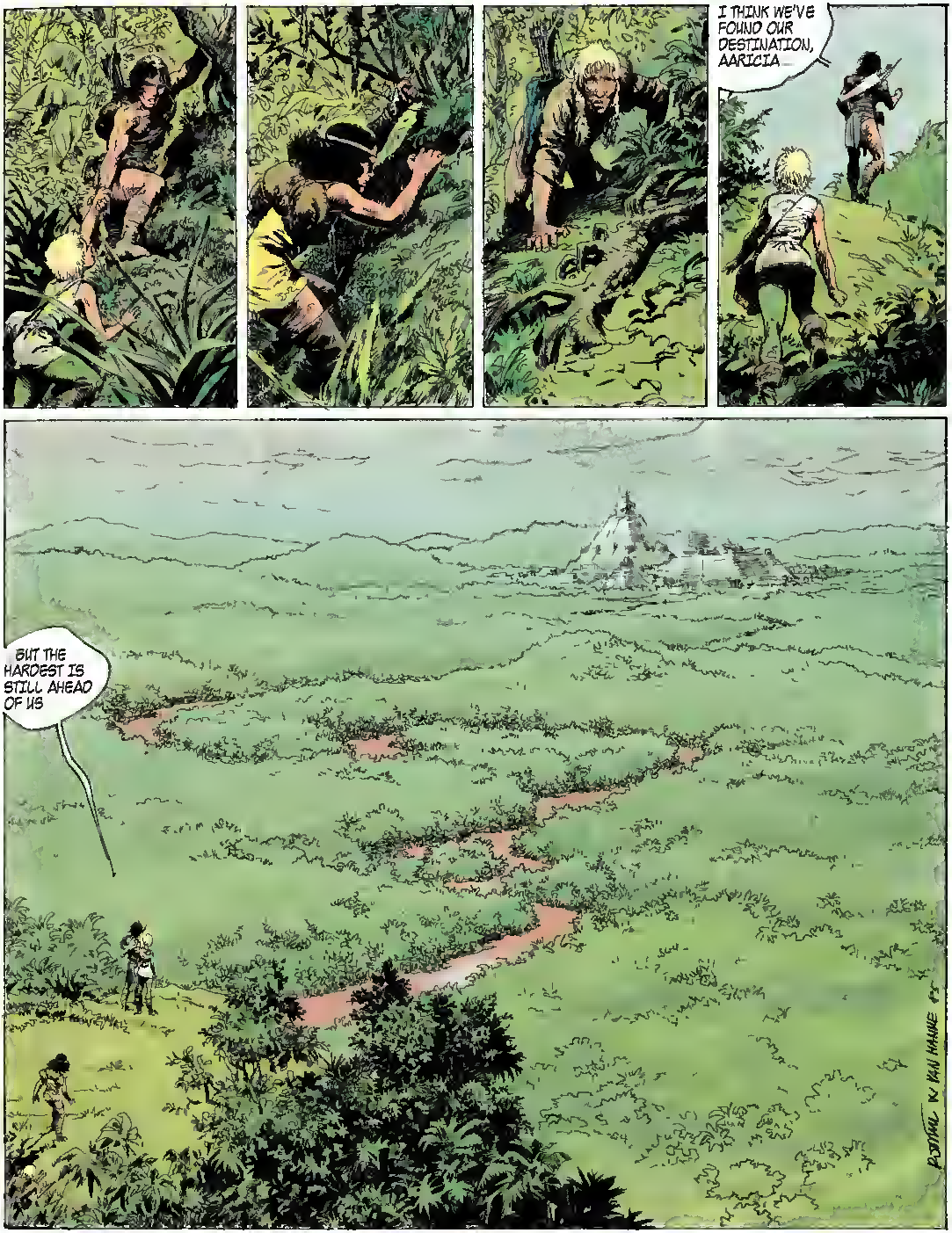

TANATLOC HAS LEFT US, BUT HE HAS NOT ABANDONED US. IN HIS WISDOM AND FORESIGHT, HE TOLD ME THE NAME OF HIS SUCCESSOR.


BEFORE LEAVING HIS LIFE ON EARTH, HE TRANSMITTED HIS POWERS TO THE BLOND CHILD FROM BEYOND THE GREAT WATER. IT WILL BE HE, FROM NOW ON, WHO WILL GUIDE OUR PEOPLE AND HELP US TO TRIUMPH OVER OGOTAI AND HIS DEMONS

WE WILL HONOUR AND SERVE HIM UNDER THE NAME OF HURUKAN, THE ONE WHO SEES!

IT IS YOU, LORD HURUKAN, WHO MUST LIGHT THE FUNERAL PYRE OF THE ONE WHO NAMED YOU.
I... I REALLY HAVE TO DO IT?
YOU HAVE TO, JOLAN. SO THAT THE SPIRIT OF OUR FRIEND CAN JOIN THOSE OF HIS ANCESTORS.
FAREWELL, TANATLOC I'LL NEVER FORGET YOU
LONG LIVE HURUKAN!
HURUKAN HURUKAN HURUKAN HURUKAN HURUKAN HURUKAN HURUKAN HURUKAN HURUKAN HURUKAN HURUKAN HURUKAN
HURUKAN HURUKAN HURUKAN HURUKAN HURUKAN HURUKAN HURUKAN

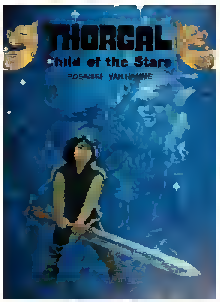
THE RIVER'S GETTING MORE AND MORE DIFFICULT TO FOLLOW...
WE'D DO BETTER TO TRY AND PASS OVER THAT HILL. IS THAT ALL RIGHT FOR YOU?
WITH YOU, EVERYTHING'S ALL RIGHT FOR ME, MY LOVE. TO FEEL YOU AT MY SIDE AGAIN GIVES ME WINGS.
THORGAL..
YES?
PLEASE, THORGAL.. HIT ME, INSULT ME, TREAT ME LIKE THE LEAST OF THE SLAVES, BUT SAY SOMETHING.. TRY TO FORGIVE ME...
COME ON, MY LOVE, THE SLOPE LOOKS TOUGH
POOR FOOL!


I THINK WE'VE FOUND OUR DESTINATION, AARICIA...
BUT THE HARDEST IS STILL AHEAD OF US
PASCAL VAN HAUWE

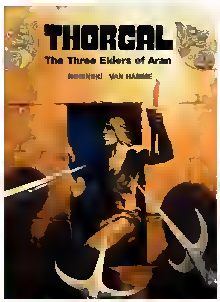
THE END

THORGAL

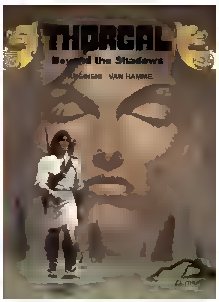
The gods have put a man to the test



❶ Child of the Stars
Incl Aaricia



❷ The Three Elders of Aran
Incl The Black Galley



❸ Beyond the Shadows
Incl The Fall of Brek Zarith

❹ The Archers
Incl Allnoe

❺ The Land of Qa
Incl The Eyes of Tanatloc

❻ City of the Lost God
Incl Between Earth and Sun

Grzegorz Rosinski, *Artist of the series* Thorgal, Chninkel, The Revenge of Count Skarbek...

Jean Van Hamme, *Script writer of the series* Thorgal, Largo Winch, XIII, Wayne Shelton, Lady S... *and movies such as* "Diva"

ISBN 978-1-905460-80-9
US $19.95
US $19 95
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